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ON
THE BEING AND ATTRIBUTES
OF
The Godhead,
AS
EVIDENCED IN CREATION.

BY
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"Should fate command me to the farthest verge
Of the green earth—to distant barbarous clime
Rivers unknown to song, where first the sun
Gilds Indian mountains, or his setting beam
Flames on the Atlantic isles; 'tis nought to me
Since God is ever present, ever felt,
In the void waste, as in the city full;
And, where He vital breathes, there must be joy."



"God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him,
Must worship Him in Spirit and in truth."

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ROBERT HARDWICKE, 192, PICCADILLY.
1872.

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DEDICATION.

TO

THE RIGHT REV. HENRY PHILPOTT, D.D., CANTAB.

LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER, ETC., ETC., ETC.

VISITOR OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE.

This Work,

ON

THE BEING AND ATTRIBUTES OF THE GODHEAD, AS EVIDENCED
IN CREATION,

IS, WITH HIS SPECIAL AND KIND PERMISSION,

DEDICATED


BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.



THE publication of this volume, particularly urged, amongst others, by one, nearest and dearest, whose mind had entered congenially into the spirit of all the thoughts and feelings expressed therein, is now undertaken, not with any special view of confirming the spiritual tenets of those who already feel confident that they stand fast on the Truth of truths, according to their knowledge, judgment and conscience ; but rather of reaching, directly or indirectly, that very considerable body of persons, both in and out of regular communions, who are now, in this century, either standing neutral, or veering between apparently opposite fundamental principles, many of them merely conforming outwardly to the customs of surrounding society—being privately doubtful as to all forms of dogmatically imposed faith—whether Hebrew, Hindoo, Christian, or Mahomedan ; yet intelligent and honest, and ready to be impressed if any strong fact or reason, within the domain of nature, once vivify their minds into a state of active thinking.



The chief opponents, in this case, to be contended against are, therefore, not any of those who merely hold antagonistic opinions upon the details of spiritual questions, but rather those others of a strongly and strangely materialistic bent, who conceive that they have searched much more deeply than all such thinkers, and, with a learning and subtlety in natural and physical science too evident to be denied, would seem desirous, from their zealous activity in the periodical press, and otherwise, of gaining over the class of intelligent waverers just spoken of; not by any positive proofs, even of their own kind, but—viewing such doubters as already half conquered—by a simple and bold denial of the prerogative of the human mind to treat of any other mind or meaning in the universe besides its own, if even of that, except as an organic function of the brain, thought being to them only a subtle derivative from the digestion of food, and a mere phenomenal transformation of a certain single, but infinitely convertible basis of all action, which they choose to call *FORCE*, and to elevate to the position of an Omnipotent, but unconscious mover and disposer of all matter; and yet as proceeding from such material action, a cause and a consequence thereof at the self-same time. So would they seek, by thus “reasoning in a circle,” and by this theoretical substitution of a mechanically originated and and mechanically acting *FORCE* in the place of *GOD*, to sap the very foundation of all proof and conviction as to

anything beyond that which may appear upon the surface, or be found apparent to the senses within the mass, of embodied things; and especially ignoring all that is not only held, but known, to be of a spiritual nature, such as that of which we feel the very strongest, and most positive consciousness, within ourselves, and, therefore, involving the attributes of design, or purpose and sentiment, including, of course, knowledge and thought, and a sense of moral right and wrong; in short, a **POWER** of will, and intelligence, and feeling, exercising its active control over all the other passive, or involuntary, forces in nature.

But, while arranging his Discourse so as to overcome the seeming difficulties which these speculators have sought to place in the way, the Author carefully avoided any personal allusions, as being out of place in such a work, seeking rather to subvert the arguments than the broachers thereof; whom he, certainly, would feel pleased to convince, but from whom he has no right to ask or expect any open acknowledgment of error, though he may hope to make them modify their present views, and, not only a little, but very much indeed, if touched by his arguments in any wise, or at all.

Neither, in adventuring upon such subjects, did he seek to trench upon the special Theologic and dogmatic domain of this, or that, or other order of divines, but rather endeavoured to handle, by natural reason, those ever-recurring broader questions, speculatively belonging

to all time, and yet, in a practical sense, peculiarly to this present day of such free and fearless discussion of them amongst the leading minds of Europe, India, and America—questions which stand as a common intellectual stock to all mankind, and which ought to be, and he believes now are, full of vital interest to the intelligent and educated of every profession and estate, to whose collective judgment, therefore, he appeals, as the fittest tribunal in these matters of such profound and universal import.

The more familiar paragraphs being addressed to one class, and the more abstruse to others, he would solicit the former not to impute obscurity to any portion of the argument before having well weighed every word of each such individual sentence; and the latter must pardon the persistency with which certain basic facts, or primary principles may be urged,—facts familiar to them, no doubt, but which happen not to be so familiar to others, and which, besides, are too often forgotten amidst the ardent pursuit of details, and the creation, therefrom, of new hypotheses, even by those who are acute practical investigators, and keenest sighted in analytical research; though the sudden remembrance of them shall, and does again and again, like the staff of Prospero, dispel into nothingness, theories the most lofty, and ingenious, and plausible, yet not resting upon the foundation of such indubitable and deep-laid truths.

D. N.

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INTRODUCTION.

I. The substance of the following work was delivered, by request, amongst a series of discourses in the year 1853, to an audience consisting of the members of a society specially interested in such subjects, and some of the author's friends and acquaintances. The chief object in view, in his case, was to bring home to every mind the rational conviction of the existence of a living and loving Godhead; not by a series of minor and detached illustrations, but by one grand and general impression of the whole scheme of things, as a collective fact, or totality, so far as the human faculties can apprehend such a matter. Others, including divines, scholars, and physicians, had been entrusted to lead the mind to the same conclusion from the details of sundry other sciences; but when the subject of cosmology was assigned to him, he felt that it was not necessary to enter into the detached evidence of this or that department of knowledge, but to grasp, if possible, by one continuous effort, these scattered radiations of light, and bring them to bear, in their united strength, upon the one governing focus of the totality.


II. To this end the main point of the argument went to show that, however separate the various portions of creation and of the sciences might seem to be, yet were they all synthetically blended in nature into one cosmic, or universal framework of fact and philosophy; such philosophy, with its facts, being an emanation or impress of the absolute will and wisdom of One Spirit, and that One Spirit being THE ONE GOD, as sole possible source of any really originative causation, involving the production of intelligence and a moral sense or conscience.

III. But sundry speculative arguments have been lately put forth or revived, in this country and elsewhere, tending to darken first principles, and to unsettle the views of mankind upon certain fundamental facts peculiarly appertaining to this momentous question; and these arguments, therefore, first required to be disposed of; inasmuch as no superstructure of truth can be satisfactorily raised without clearing away all obstructing matters on the surface, and fixing the foundations so deeply as to give a confidence in their stability, and a conviction of their supporting power in all parts of the edifice. Yet, the author is led to believe that the form of argument adopted by him meets such difficulties, and is calculated to allay the doubts and fears of many wavering inquirers, especially such as desire to follow a continuity of reasoning in one broad, but straight path, rather than be carried hither and thither in their mental journey; though ultimately with much trouble, and perhaps some remaining confusion, to arrive at the same destination. In short, an endeavour was made to proceed

from indubitable first principles, and, never losing sight of them, to keep all within a sort of synoptical, or bird's-eye view, so that the various and winding ways above spoken of, might all be seen tending in the one common direction to which such first principles inevitably point.

IV. From the necessity he was under of condensing the impressions of an universal survey into discourses of but comparatively brief duration, he finds, on reviewing some of the sentences containing matter of illustration, that they are of considerable length, in correspondence with the multiplicity and extent of the objects embraced by them; but, from the component waves of such sentences all flowing in one way, and, in their interpretative spirit, being only varied repetitions of one another, no want of clearness, he trusts, can be the result, but rather the reverse, as one or other illustration may happen to suit the nature or acquirements of one or other mind; seeing, also, that such abstruse matters can take permanent root only by dint of inculcation and inculcation.

V. He tried, however, to deviate as little as possible from his proposed direct line, and it was only for the sake of securing an irrefragable basis of thought that he sought at the outset to combat the peculiar sophisms and absurd negations of certain thinkers, who are either professedly or virtually atheists, and it may be thought by some, only professedly, and not virtually thinkers; otherwise, in his own mind, he felt that such efforts were almost unnecessary, for he still looks upon these sophisms and negations as mere morbid manifestations, or rather



affectations, belonging to individual idiosyncrasies, and not to any general bodies of mankind; inasmuch as, though we may meet with such pervertedly acute persons here and there, just as we meet with madmen, idiots, eccentrics, or utterly deformed figures, we never encounter any extensive communities of such a description, except, perhaps, when congregated by artificial arrangements, such as subsist amongst certain sects that are held thus together rather by some common temporal interest, than by any real and sincere unity of metaphysical doctrine.


VI. At the same time, out of regard to a great number of persons who are shaken in their minds, though not actually perverted by such arguments, and to show these opponents that their objections had not been avoided or overlooked, he felt bound, as already stated, to look to the foundation of his reasonings, and, in doing so, could not but discriminate, in the first place, between a sound philosophical self-distrust, or natural modest caution, by which the finite mind rectifies its own first impressions by a careful comparison with subsequent observations and the impressions of others; and that form of scepticism which becomes a positive absurdity, and neutralises, or rather quite contradicts, itself, by lapsing into a careless, or even blind, acceptance of such mere negations as if they were positive facts. For, surely, the walking dreamer, who has brought himself to doubt the existence of his own soul and its thoughts, and, consequently, everything else besides, has reached the utmost height of credulity as much as of scepticism. It

is as if such an one had heard that a great philosopher had said, "I think, therefore I am," and forthwith, by a supposed parity of reasoning, had averred, "I think not, therefore I am not," or, at all events, to avoid a mere play upon words, "Unthinking things think not, and, therefore, they are not;" such being too often the preposterous issues of that verbal sophistry, so closely allied to mere punning, to which not these alone, but also some of pre-eminent abilities, affect to bow—yea, even publishing most elaborate works with the acknowledged object of proving that nothing can be proved. This merely shows that there are certain absurdities in which only fools and certain so-called philosophers can mutually seem to acquiesce; so, most unjustly, bringing logic itself into disrepute with that fair average balance of sound judgment, regulating thought, which is called the common or good sense of mankind at large; as when, for instance, it has been held by such kind of disputants that the words "this" and "that," "here" and "there," and "up" and "down," being expressive of perfect opposites and contraries, according to the mere relative position of the utterer, showed that anything was all things, or anything, or nothing, according to the mere position of the Ego; or that, as the words "nothing," "non-entity," or "non-being," signify a mental myth, destitute of all attributes, so absolute and pure abstract Being itself—that is to say, Being stripped of all its attributes, comes to be equivalent to non-being; and thus that pure abstract Being and non-being are one and the same thing, or rather, nothing; forgetting, meanwhile, that Being, in the abstract, is itself

only a quality, or the expression of a quality, residing in some real substance, either physical or spiritual, and that essential, as contradistinguished from accidental attributes, are not mere abstractable attendants upon any form of Real Being, but the substantial and only proper constituents of its existence as an essence or entity; seeing that Being itself, as above said, is but one of the necessary qualities appertaining to the Real; and, on the other hand, that "nothing," "non-entity," and "non-being," as well as this so-called "abstract being," are not things, but mere words, indicative only of a mental conception of what utter nullity might be imagined to be, and no entity or essence, or possible portion of any entity or essence whatsoever. But of this negation of any real existence, either in mind or matter, more anon, though its advocates in reality should not exist to hear any such arguments.

VII. Secondly. In like plight appeared to him those extreme idealists who deny the existence of all external objects, except as ideas within the consciousness; their very use of the words "external objects" involving them from the outset in a self-contradiction; for even if things did not exist *to us*, except in the consciousness, which may be readily granted in one sense of the terms and in a limited degree, their assertion would amount only to the mere truism, that without consciousness we cannot be conscious. But the truth is that the existence of outward things is proved to our satisfaction, not by any spontaneous and arbitrary suggestions of our own sensuous organization, which is merely the recipient and vehicle of these impressions from without, nor by any mere motion of the

inner consciousness itself, but also by verification from the consciousness of others ; and not only so, but from a combination of inner and outer evidence of the reactions of those objects upon one another in the absence of ourselves, and on our own bodies in the absence, or abeyance of our consciousness ; such action, in these cases, being recognizable only in the results and after investigations often very laborious, very protracted, and very difficult ; even when involving those very processes which are being constantly carried on within our own organisms during the deepest sleep, and quite independently of any concurrent action of the will or intellect ; being often, on the contrary, of the most startling and unexpected character, and so far from what we wanted, that they may be the very least agreeable to our wishes. Besides which, if the consciousness, as they assert, had no real perception of any external objects, and if all such apparently external objects were, as they say, mere evolutions from the consciousness according to a certain congenital law which compels it to take its own illusions for external realities ; then, just as the human consciousness in its general nature constantly repeats itself through successive generations ; so these illusions, as products of such a fixed law, should as constantly repeat themselves in their general nature, and, therefore, every man born into intellectual life should see exactly the same external, or, as they would have it—internal—universe, quite independently of time, or place, or light, or darkness, or anything else. But this is obviously not the fact, unless we ignore time, and place, and light, and darkness, &c. ; for the objects and aspects



of the external universe are as infinite as the variations of time, and place, &c., can make them; and the impressions made by them upon the individual consciousness are as infinitely varied as the objects themselves; as, indeed, springing from them, and not from any uniform internal impulse acting independently of time, and place, and all other extraneous circumstances. An exact correspondence subsists between the idea and the reality when mind and object are brought into perfect accordance with each other, which correspondence, when sufficiently authenticated, is of necessity accepted as the criterion of all human truth; and any deviation from such correspondence, except it arise from imperfection of the senses, or other such cause, must indicate some fundamental source of error in the mind itself. In fact, so much is this the case that there is no feature in mental insanity that so fatally vitiates every process of thinking, however highly developed the faculties may otherwise be, as this one of subjective invention, or self-delusion, be it ever so restricted. It is, indeed, the very essence of such insanity, wherein the sufferer lives as in a waking dream. And if all our thoughts were begotten and rooted in the consciousness alone, without any regard to external and material, or, as they would say, non-existent world, how should they be ever altered, or modified as they are, or how could we ever get rid of such primitive and excusable ideas as that our earth neither rotated on its axis, nor rushed through space, or of any other of the thousands of errors and mistakes to which the bare senses and other uncultivated faculties are naturally liable? But, in truth,

the action and reaction of mind, and the material universe are reciprocal, and while the inferences and deductions are formed by acts of observation, comparison, and judgment from within, the material of knowledge upon which these are founded is drawn altogether through experience from without, and unless it were so there would be no need of senses at all, or of any other form of organization, such as they, indeed, to be consistent, must aver to be merely mythical, or ideal. But that our knowledge does not proceed from one single and purely subjective source is indubitably proved by two familiar facts, namely, that while, on the one hand, our experience brings before us thousands of objects such as no imagination had ever so much as conceived, or only conceived to deny their possibility; so, on the other, our earlier mistakes and false inferences are constantly corrected by a like more extended experience and reflection, altogether subversive of our more primitive notions. It is this verified correspondence, or mutual corroboration of the evidences of the outward and inward worlds, which alone and most effectually enables us to pronounce with due confidence upon truth, the first and last object of the intellectual consciousness. And, indeed, but for this, there would be no distinction between the sane and the insane, for all would be insane alike, and incapable of judgment.

VIII. And, thirdly, as to those who practically admit what they call the seeming existence of a consciousness, and of an external material universe, but deny, theoretically, that anything can be really known of either of

them, or that even their bare existence can be proved; they might almost be left to themselves and their own barren logic—if it deserve the name of logic at all—except for the sake of showing that their own imagined theoretical fruit is only as Jonah's gourd, with its own withering worm already within it; inasmuch as their greatest modern apostle, who hath never as yet been surpassed amongst them, concluded his elaborate argument with the admission, that while upholding his abstract position of an universal scepticism, in regard both to mind and matter, as one that was quite unanswerable, that is to say, to, or by, those who might adopt the absurdity of maintaining such a self-contradictory dogma, which affirms that neither the affirmer, nor his affirmation, nor the matter of affirmation can be proved to exist—he yet could not deny but that we were so constituted that it was not only impossible to have any conviction of its truth, but quite the reverse; all which, to use his own expression towards some of his adversaries, was really “reasoning in a circle;” like one who would attempt to disprove the rotundity of the earth, merely by refusing to accept the validity of the one master fact of actual experiment, and still continuing to doubt and circumnavigate during his whole term of life. But the very act of doubting proves the presence of mind, and also of some object giving rise to doubt; and although the faculty of perception in its very simplest imaginable form of a self-consciousness, poised, as it were, within dark space, may not necessarily imply belief of any other things, except itself and the space it occupies, both as an

object and subject ; yet, either belief, or even an expressed non-belief, must imply the faculty of perception, and therefore the existence of mind at least, if not of other things perceived by it under light, such as the very page it reads, and the grammatical order of language which it constructs in order to enunciate the so-called doubt. And also as to the very logic which these doubters profess to worship, its primary law declares that no positive syllogistic proof can be led without the previous basis of a positive affirmation.

IX. Such metaphysicians are walking dreamers like the others ; but in the peculiarly anomalous condition of being practically and confessedly conscious that they are so ; knowing and acknowledging all the facts of science and history like ordinary people, and writing books about them ; while, at the same time trembling, or affecting to tremble, for the stability of the foundation on which all depends, they continue to seek and call for that which can never possibly be found, namely, some external and secondary form of proof of that which is above the scope of all external and secondary proof, even the rational soul, without whose foundation of support, all such kind of proofs were dead and meaningless ; seeing also, as an eternal necessary truth, that even the Supreme, Himself, can know of His own Being by self-consciousness alone ; self-consciousness being simply the inner sense and absolute knowledge of self-being, and inducing so telling a conviction and certitude of itself to self, that this demand of any further so-called proof is purely absurd, and literally postposterous. Because, in truth, the intellectual conscious-

ness is the one specially self-evident, living, and dominating fact, which moulds all other facts into what it calls proofs: yet merely as its own weapons or tools; because it is the precedent power which actually and alone calls proofs as proofs into existence—and that too—never for any other object than to subserve its own purposes of demonstration and conviction to other minds. Wherefore, as they derive their origin and efficacy, as secondary means, from it, and as it is not derived from them, it cannot be made the consequent, the subject, or dependent of its own subsequently inborn and inbred creatures; but is, on the contrary, the sole ultimate court of appeal which must necessarily determine their validity and legitimacy in all arguments that can be raised, and more especially, in those that immediately concern itself and its attributes including that of its recognition of an external world. And, although different forms, degrees, or conditions of mental consciousness may continually exhibit that external world under varying shapes and lights, so that it does not appear exactly the same to any two minds; and although a Supreme consciousness might to us transform its meaning altogether, simply by showing us some new and unexpected relationship of things to one another; yet still such varying shapes and lights, and even such perfect transformation of meaning, would all be found to have proceeded only from the exercise of consciousness, and to be appreciable by consciousness alone. Therefore, even as regards what is called a positive philosophy, which affects to look at facts only, what facts can be more positive than these?

X. Certainly, as already admitted, there are innumerable sources of error as to the colour, size, form,

and various other qualities of bodies, arising from optical, mechanical, chemical, and other such external causes, as well as from certain internal conditions of body and mind; but these have no permanently abiding effect upon the intellectual consciousness—far less are they any essential portion of it, while in a sane condition; but are ever more and more dispelled, according as our experience and thinking are increased, the judging faculty continuing the same, and the inherent desire for truth constituting the self-rectifying axis of all our thoughts; so that—to use some familiar illustrations—the rod bending in the water, the reflections of mirrors, the magnification, contraction, multiplication, distortion, or reversed position of objects under different optical media, the sensible impressions of heat and cold, &c., the altered qualities of elements by chemical combination, and the apparent motions of the heavenly and other bodies, all melt before the eye of the mind as it becomes more and more perfected by experience and reflection, and are finally resolved by reason into mere appearances as contrasted with realities. The mental consciousness is thus all the more improved and exalted through the very defectiveness of its corporeal instruments, and the mastery of truth over error is, therefore, resolved into a question of opportunity and sufficiency of thinking—conditions which are always naturally on the increase, though occasionally retarded by untoward temporary circumstances.

XI. Nay more, the very dormancy in which the intellectual consciousness itself is periodically involved

during the repose of the cerebral organization, gives it the power of distinguishing all the more forcibly between such dormancy and watchfulness ; when, by introspection, it not only perceives the brilliancy of the quickened light, but also the black void of the intervening darkness, and by this internal analysis of such opposite conditions within itself, is enabled to stand firmly upon that basis of contrast which is the primary and necessary foundation of all distinctive cognition. Whoso should deny such things as the above, must, therefore, know, on the very first mention of the fact, that his very act of denial confutes itself, and that the very madness of the subtlety which thus seeks to refine everything into nothing, also refines its very self away ; so that it becomes, with all its train of less than shadowy inferences, an absolute nullity, or, at best, a mere ideal expression of an imagined perfect and utter nullity, while mind and matter continue to stand before him, and all his fellow beings as of old ; the delusions of dreaming, and other forms of imaginative license, only affording us a better means of discrimination between the false and the true. Such persons, therefore, while seeking to deny the existence of a God, seem to feel that, to be consistent, they can possibly do so, only by denying, in the first place, their own existence, and that of all other objects in the universe, a stultifying feature in their character, which, as it is never manifested in any other than this one question in the abstract, so may be justly viewed as a temporary affectation of puzzling argument, and not as any abiding or sincere conviction of the mind ; as, indeed, according to their own allegation

and mode of reasoning, nothing could abide within that which itself is not. But, in fact, in demanding such external and secondary proofs of the internal modes of being and thinking, they simply endeavour to conceal that there are ultimate facts or axioms of mind which are above the necessity of any so-called logical proof; being themselves, as already observed, the very foundation of all such kind of proofs, and which subsist simply in virtue of, and in consistency with, the innate and essential principle of mind, as necessary attributes of its being; for, even although the declaration of Descartes, above spoken of, "I think, therefore, I am," assumes, as it were, the form of a syllogistic proof, with its major and minor terms and conclusion, such as—1, that which thinks—is—2, I think—3, therefore I am." Yet it will be perceived that the syllogism is quite unnecessary, and is manifestly a redundancy of mere words; because the I, in affirming that that which thinks— is, does, by that very act, affirm itself, and its essential prerogative at the very outset. And the same principle is applicable to all the other axioms, or basic facts, of metaphysics and mathematics, including those of this logic itself, which are eternal, and immutable necessary truths; entirely founded upon this basis of mind as a veritable and self-known reality of being, and from whose inferences there is no possible escape so long as mind continues to be what it is; and that it could, in such respects, be otherwise than it now is, is quite inconceivable, and therefore altogether out of any question that can arise amongst rational beings. Surely, again, no fact can be more positive than this, or

more worthy of acceptance as a basis of all our reasoning? Some, begging the question, as it were, of these opponents, and as if they felt themselves to be in a merely negative position, have requested to be allowed to assume, or suppose, or hypothetically take for granted this fundamental verity; but any such favour is to be repudiated, while the fact can be affirmed as an indubitable certitude, verbally assailable, no doubt, but utterly irremovable even from the assailant's own mind, and more certain, in its essentiality, than any other formula, or body of knowledge of which to us it is the necessary basis and receptacle, self-asserted and self-demonstrated, as the demonstrator of all other demonstrations whatsoever. In fact, such disputants have no real right, according to their own showing of personal nullity, to stand up, or speak at all, having voluntarily, as the lawyers have it, "put themselves out of court;" such court veritably existing; while they themselves, so to speak, choose to cease to be, if they do admit themselves ever to have been at all.

XII. But, at all events, seeking, as much as possible, to cast aside such pedantic playthings, as falsities unworthy of the gravity of the occasion, the author rather sought to look upon nature with a natural eye, not in the restricted meaning of non-initiation, but in the broadest sense of those terms; and to draw natural or unforced inferences therefrom of a positive kind; and not to summon up a host of negative theories only to hurl back denial for denial, or to untwist one web of fallacies only to twist another, and so leave the great question where it was. He felt, in short, in approaching the subject, that

he had little, or rather, nothing, to do with far-fetched, impracticable, and sophistically-invented doubts about his own being, or anything else ;—doubts, be it added, such as never influence the daily modes of life, or even the most formal reasonings in physical philosophy, or pure mathematics, or even, as we have seen, metaphysics, of those who pretend to entertain them ; but that he had simply to exhibit the primal, as it is also the final, impression made upon the human mind by external nature, and itself, according to the recognised fixed, and in sundry cases necessary, laws which govern them both, and which, being accepted in their methods and objects of working, as clear expressions of wisdom, and on that ground, as laws, imply the pre-existence of a law-giver ; or to speak technically, out of this matter of cosmology, or doctrine of natural order, to educe a cosmo-theological or Divine principle acceptable alike to the higher reason, the piety, and the common-sense of mankind, as one race ; such principle being the one necessary foundation of all religion, whatever different forms it may present in different times and places.

XIII. Lastly, in exhibiting such impression, as leading to the conclusion of a Divine moral governor of the universe, he endeavoured to show that, putting aside the above-mentioned apparent exceptions, as being not real, but affected, or acknowledged by themselves as being practically insufficient, it may safely be advanced as one that is universal, though existing in many different degrees of force, depth, and clearness, according to the different capacities of individual men and nations, and being also

occasionally dimmed, or even almost eclipsed, in some minds, not merely from ignorance or want of thought, but also under the perplexity produced by those abstruse though erroneous subtleties which have just been spoken of. For, from the silently imploring upturned eye, or the ejaculated prayer for Divine help proceeding from untutored lips, to the more or less grand and impressive utterances of the highest intellectuality regarding the Supreme Godhead, all are equally governed by the one key-note of dependence and adoration. The collective rays of human thought thus all point, with more or less lustre and distinctness, to one common centre, and towards that centre all the moral and intellectual instincts within our cognizance appear to look for life and sustaining love, as by a spiritual necessity, consequent upon, or rather coeval with, their very existence as such; and so weighty a fact, unless positively proved to be grounded on some great mistake, is worthy of the most serious consideration as one of the deepest significance, and proving it to be rooted in the very nature of mind itself. And the force of such an argument is not in the least degree weakened by any consideration of such errors of belief as arise from the apparent motion of the sun from east to west, and the like; since, though none but an insane (if educated) mind could possibly resist the proofs to the contrary as now laid down; yet only an insane mind, stumbling upon the truth by mistake, or through a morbid contradictoriness, could have adopted the true view before the proofs were presented to it, or (if uneducated) without a reasonable confidence in him who

broached it. The sound mind must believe according to existing evidences, internal as well as external, until other and stronger evidences can be adduced upon the other side of any question; and, in the course of this work, such positive proofs, internal and external, will be put forward as may tend to show that the universal conviction of mankind is a rational one; even although multitudes of individuals may never have examined the entire breadth and depth of that foundation upon which it actually rests, or ever be able, of themselves, to refute all the subtleties in which they are apt to become entangled.


D. N.

ON
THE BEING AND ATTRIBUTES
OF THE
GODHEAD,
AS EVIDENCED IN CREATION.

PART FIRST.

OF THE ORIGIN OF THE IDEA CONCERNING GOD AND
HIS ATTRIBUTES, IN RELATION TO THE HUMAN
MIND, AND EXTERNAL NATURE.

I. From the vastness, or rather infinitude, of the subject which is attempted to be considered on the present occasion, one feels that the great difficulty consists, not in finding materials for observation, but in so generalising upon those which present themselves in such endless array as to keep in constant view the one grand object, without wandering into mazes and labyrinths of detail which, however interesting to explore in themselves, would yet tend to make us forget the one central and all-dominating idea of a spiritual power in and over nature, upon which it is essential that every thought should unceasingly hinge in this discourse upon the



Divine Being, and the visible or otherwise appreciable manifestations of His attributes within this universe, and especially in relation to the soul of man, all being sought to be viewed as one connected whole, exhibiting many sciences, but underlaid by one wisdom.

II. This discipline is the more necessary in order to avoid any encouragement of the common supposition that Cosmology, or the doctrine of the order of the universe, is but another name for an intimate acquaintance with all the physical and moral sciences in their detail, instead of being, as it is, a distinctive subject proceeding indeed out of the material of all those sciences, and supported by each of them as by pillars and buttresses, yet having a character peculiar to itself, not necessarily dependent upon any one, or more, of them, but holding an independent existence, even as it did before any kind of knowledge had as yet been devised as a separate scheme of study. Hence, in the earliest recorded times, the minds of men could not help forming for themselves certain general ideas of the beautiful results of Creation, or Cosmology, quite irrespective of those artificial sub-divisions of the subject which have since constituted the specific sciences; and it is equally indubitable that, at the same time, they proceeded to form certain Cosmo-theological ideas of a Creator, in accordance with His visible or otherwise appreciable works, independently of any universal knowledge of such details, or of any Divine inspiration, excepting that which is more or less the common heritage of all men; namely, the inner light of reason and reflection, bestowed as a

distinguishing faculty by Him who made them after His own image, as it is expressed, and breathed into them the breath of life, yet not merely as such alone for mere bodily sustenance, but as an enkindling leaven of His own Divine intelligence.

III. Indeed, considering the nature of the consciousness, we can very readily apprehend, even in those early ages, before science came to be systematised as it now is, how the first views of nature would affect the human soul. How simple, and yet how conclusive, would be the one grand inference drawn by an intellectual being of primitive unsophisticated mind after contemplating the boundless and wonderful array of objects, far and near, which would present itself to his senses and his understanding! Not by any formal and minute analysis of the various parts; not by any subtle and laborious process of ratiocination; but by one overwhelming impression of a greatness beyond his own greatness, of a power beyond his own power; would he be stunned, as it were, into a sense of his own littleness and dependence, as compared with something supreme, and mysterious, and adorable, which, though he might have no articulate enunciation or name for it, he yet recognised in the very depths of his moral and intellectual consciousness or soul, as God the Almighty Father—this idea of God the Almighty Father being to him a spiritual conception of the truth, founded on that vast, though, as yet, vague and indefinite impression produced by a general review of the heavens and the earth and all that in them is—the sun, moon, and stars—the brilliant, fleeting clouds, varying with the varying winds


and sunbeams—the alternations of day and night and of the seasons—rolling oceans and rivers—growing trees and plants—animals in their varied forms and movements—birds as they fly, fishes as they swim—and, finally, his own mysterious mental constitution, not only capable of receiving and containing all the images of those things, but of thus reflecting them by memory and imagination, as from a mirror, the powers of which he yet must have felt to proceed, not from those outward objects themselves, as being things evidently distinct from himself, but from an inner clear depth of his own being—his own, so far as the possession of it went, yet not of his own creation, but, obviously, the gift of whomsoever made him and all things else besides.

IV. It is this sense of his partial independence of surrounding objects, and of his connection with an active, invisible and spiritual something within himself, constituting himself, yet derived from a kindred power infinitely superior to that self, which arouses our chief interest in contemplating man in relation to the external world and to God. Whether we consider his wonderful physical structure, the number and complexity of its parts, their special and general relation to one another, and the beauty of their separate and combined action; or whether we contemplate this still more wonderful mind, its sensibilities, its passions, its intellectual faculties, and its tenderer impulses of sympathy and unselfish love, we must still be specially struck, as thinking beings, not so much by the perfect adaptation of all those various powers to the various surrounding objects (since the same

appertains to all animals whether of higher or lower degree), as by the ability of real mind, being a reduced semblance of the great original, to create, as it were, these innumerable new combinations and real abstractions, which, not being mere generalizations formed from the concrete, have no direct representative types in the outer or physical world, but are born of the internal reactions of that soul which, by these its purely immaterial perceptions of abstract metaphysical truth, and by its conscience or innate sense of moral right and wrong, is thus felt and known to be of a Divine origin, or of a Divinely transmitted, or supermaterial nature ; not the merely mechanical or chemical, or even physiological result of the organization, but of an essence similar to that of the author of the organization ; inasmuch as this same power of the human mind to originate from out of its own being such ideas as are not mere reflections of external objects, conveyed through the channel of the senses, but true and real metaphysical and moral conceptions and designs begotten from, and nurtured within, its own depths, indicates its affinity however distant to the Divine and really originating mind, in which abstract conceptions and designs, as pre-ordinations must, of necessity, have preceded all material organization, just as our faculty of contrivance, in like manner, must necessarily precede the existence of the things contrived by us ; the orderly marshalling of the thoughts being no more the result of mere material organization of itself, except so far as it is a means devised by the Creator for their conveyance to other minds and organisations, than is the orderly flow of

musical combinations the result of musical instruments of themselves ; but, just as both the instruments and the music, in the latter case, are due to a preceding really efficient cause, in the shape of that musical invention which called them both into being, in order to express the more cherished emotions of the soul ; so, in the former, the spiritual reactions of this soul are certainly traceable to a preceding spiritual and efficiently originating cause, as different in essence from the visible organisation as is the musical mind from the material of its instruments. For, if otherwise, the organisation would have to be accepted as the cause of itself, which is a manifest absurdity ; excepting in the restricted sense that, after its original creation, it may possess within, yet not of itself, the secondary or derived powers of a relatively infinite, but blind reproductiveness ; seeing that even man himself does not form, but only transmits a constitution already formed for him, he knows not at all how, but only as a matter of experience. In fact, the array of ideas in a book might as well be viewed as the result of a certain self-organisation of letters and words, or the action of an engine as the result of a certain self-arrangement of its various parts, without taking into any account the purposes and powers of their respective contrivers.

V. Besides which, the conscious intellect, though conjoined with matter so organised by some precedent mind, as to be a means of communication with the physical universe amidst which it is placed, and to which it is expressly adapted, not only feels itself to be distinct in active personal identity from its partially enveloping



sheath of flesh, perpetually undergoing passive changes, and which, directed by powers quite apart from the consciousness, is quite as much external to it as is the rest of the universe, though more immediately conjoined to it with its organs of sense as special points of inter-communication therewith; but it also knows that it produces those really abstract ideas above spoken of, which are nullities so far as matter is concerned, such as are related to the non-physical existences of the mathematical point, and the mathematical line, theoretical forms of immaterial circles and squares, &c., with all the infinity of deductions resulting therefrom; metaphysical, and other purely mental notions and generalisations, time, eternity, abstract numbers, absolute infinitude, absolute nullity, the various sentiments of justice, mercy, conscientiousness, and thought itself, none of which have any characteristics referable to matter or its mechanical qualities, of which alone the senses can take cognizance; and, not having created itself nor the organisation, it refers their creation to a thought-inspired power, or that primal intelligent cause upon the living, and life-imparting, energies of which both itself and the organisations continue to depend. For, just as in the musical, or other instrument, the mechanism would be meaningless, or, at all events, without any result, unless put into action by a mind at least kindred to that of the inventor; so, in the living man, the cerebral organisation has ever remained dormant until the mental faculties have been evoked or educed and brought into activity by some leaven of spiritual energy akin to themselves, and, consequently, to that of the

source from which they sprang ; whether directly emanating from fellow-beings, or operating through the evidently pre-appointed, because universally and precisely adapted, exciting agencies in nature ; since no one could possibly think, as the only other alternative in the question, of assigning to the particles of inert matter of themselves, not merely the power of mutual self-disposal, so as to form a complicated and orderly physical organisation, and which would imply for each individual molecule a fore-knowledge of the whole of such organisation, like the members of some vast body of disciplined troops all rushing at one word, each one to the right place, but of evolving other functions therefrom, infinitely more at variance with their natural inertness and subjection to the more subtle forces or laws that govern them. For, indeed, the basis of contrast between matter and mind is here most complete and perfect, seeing that all the qualities of the first are either visible, tangible, ponderable, or otherwise appreciable by the senses ; whereas the desires, ideas, and other attributes of the second, are neither visible, tangible, ponderable, or anywise appreciable, even by kindred spirits themselves, unless at the will of their possessor : a distinction as sharp and clear as any that exists in all nature between any two opposite entities, and not to be invalidated even by the fact that what we call occult, or latent properties and laws, or principles, do exist, not only in the mechanical structure of animals and vegetables, but also in lifeless matter itself, as controlling essences of its action ; seeing that these latter are ever manifested in one passive and invariable way, under the assigned physical

or physiological conditions, in contradistinction to the infinitely variable, yet self-directed action of that deliberate will and internal motive and purpose of thought which are to be found in real mind alone. We also clearly discern the limitation and exhaustibility of matter in time and space: that is to say, that, however vast, and also infinitely divisible material products may be, and so as to be called indestructible, they are yet divided at the expense of the mass to which they belong, which is thus, as a mass, ultimately expended or dissipated, as in gold spread out by the gilder; whereas mental products are infinitely diffusible and inexhaustible, and without any diminution of their force in time or space, so long as, under the peculiar light of the moral affinities, they meet with their kindred essence: as when the spirit, or vivifying principle, of any design in art or science is absorbed and cherished by thousands of active recipients capable of appreciating such spirit; or when the ideas of a philosopher or poet are poured into millions of minds from generation to generation, increasing and not diminishing by that process of endless diffusion and distribution. The material gold thus has the law of limitation imposed upon itself, while the mental gold is only limited by the limitation of the recipients; itself being subject to no such law, but being, indeed, relatively infinite. It might be rebutted that the material object is, as it were, multiplied in a similar manner, as when millions of eyes behold one and the same thing; but it is evident that it is only the idea that is multiplied, and not the thing itself, and that ideas can originate in, and be appreciated by, mind alone; the

things themselves being only the passively exciting or conveying media through which spirit appeals to spirit with, and for, a meaning. We positively and personally know that this is the fact as regards matters of human contrivance, whether in mechanics, architecture, statuary, music, painting, or books; and from precisely like evidence, and by like reasoning, must we conclude that the same fact is testified to us by the works of nature; and not only so, but to an infinitely greater extent and degree, all pointing to the existence of an Author, who yet is as invisible to our bodily eyes as are the souls of ourselves and of our fellow-beings.

VI. And although we can easily conceive the very densest forms of matter to be rarified, volatilized, and rendered transparent so as to become a sort of æther, almost approaching to the idea of real spirit: we yet can never entirely lose hold of their common material qualities as portions of bodies, however subdivided; seeing that the smallest particle must still possess the qualities of the mass; nor can we cease to perceive the dependence of these qualities upon laws of order which could never be imagined to have been devised by such particles of themselves; but must have been imposed upon them by a supreme intellectuality, or governing will, from which alone true order is positively known to proceed: Whereas, on the other hand, so subtle, so active, and so diffusible an essence as the rational, and volitional consciousness, we cannot, by any effort, imagine to exist under any concrete form as the real pith of its being; or otherwise allied to such form than as a mere means of its

interchanging impressions with others, through the medium of a physical world; even as thoughts and their meanings are conveyed through material words, the latter being nothing of themselves beyond visible, or audible arbitrary signs, so often lying barren of all signification, until the light of the interpreter's mind dawns upon them, and evolves their intellectual essence. Neither can the mind recognise in such thinking, and thought-perceiving faculties, or their operations and products, though constituting its very self, any element, or quality that can be said to be derivable from matter, as matter alone; but only in connection with certain special and complicated combinations of particular kinds of matter, contrived under a skill evidently proceeding from some preceding source of power similar to its own intellectual being. For, in such a question as this, or in any other, contingent conditions, or merely subsidiary adjuncts, however relatively necessary, must be clearly distinguished from the one absolutely necessary and efficiently quickening cause of the specific series of results; for, just as a seed may lie dormant for an indefinitely long period, and then shoot forth into a tree, so soon as moisture, heat, light, air, and such other elements are presented to its action; yet the source of such metamorphic action, or the real power of the orderly and specific development of the plant, lies neither in the moisture, the heat, the light, the air, or any other subsidiary element of the kind, including even the mechanism, or organisation itself, any more than the orderly, yet passive, action of the steam-engine or the clock, or the musical instrument, can be said to be derived

from any one, or all of their parts or appliances; except as subordinated, and involuntary agents of that mind which, as a conscious source of such synthetical action, made and arranged them, and co-ordinated all their motions to its own definite purposes. And so, in like manner, not only with this selective and synthetical power of specific development abiding in every seed; but in all other results in nature, that are not effected by means which we in our ignorance are wont to call purely accidental; because they either recur perpetually from apparently fortuitous sequences, or so occur only once, never, perhaps, to occur again. And if these arguments be applicable to a seed, in regard to that essential virtue or focus of developmental power regulating all the other subsidiary agencies, including the mechanical organisation, which we call its vitality; or to an artificial machine in regard to the purposed object of all its pre-arranged parts; how much more to man himself! in whom, while the conscious, and, so to speak, almost unlimited development of mind by will, and determination, and opportunity, is united with the unconscious, involuntary and strictly limited development of body: both are yet so sensibly distinct from each other, that while, as just observed, we cannot conceive any material organisation to have taken place without the active intervention of mind, it is equally inconceivable that mind could be produced by any really spontaneous or truly orderly action of matter alone: inasmuch as any such real spontaneity of orderly action, as distinguished from mentally devised automatic arrangements for working

mechanically, chemically, or otherwise, in an unvarying manner would, of itself, indicate the presence of design, or its factor, mind, and so prove the distinctive existence of the very essence brought, by the materialists, under question ; although thus affirming it to be a mere property belonging to matter, under some peculiar forms,—forms assumed they know not how, nor pretend, in any way to explain, and therefore no more than a baseless supposition on their part, yet implying, if it signify anything at all, that matter is God, and God is matter, a question already disposed of.

VII. In truth, without flying abroad into the more distant realms of nature, no facts can speak more emphatically of the distinct line of separation between mind and matter, even when the latter is most highly organised, than those that are the closest to ourselves, and most immediately connected with the operations going on perpetually, not only in the simpler and grosser parts of the bodily system, and in such as are automatically arranged, like the muscles and joints, &c., for the workings of our instinctive and other animal functions ; but also in the nourishment and evolutionary growth of the more complicated and delicate organs, including even the brain itself, though it be, with its seemingly most unlikely and “pultaceous” consistence, as Sydenham has it, the special seat of all the senses, and so immediately connected with the mental faculties, where processes are thus, so to speak, spontaneously elaborated, obviously the result of design : yet of a kind quite beyond all human skill, or comprehension, and of which the finite spirit within is quite as

unaware as of anything that occurs in other bodies external to its own: though, by exercising its contemplative powers, wherein it so differs from the seed, and all other forms of organic life, it may attain to a partial knowledge of them; though only by researches and reasonings of the most circuitous, and difficult nature. In exercising this power of contemplation, and, in reflecting upon the evidence of special self-identity; all such processes and all such functions can be separated, not only ideally, from what we call self; but are so separated in reality, so far as the natural ignorance is concerned, and apart from the acquired knowledge in anatomy, chemistry, and physiology. Every one feels, for instance, that he might, and often fain would, exchange all the subsidiary circumstances and conditions of his bodily life and organisation, without ceasing to be *himself*; nay, we actually do use artificial limbs, lenses, and sundry other instruments for such a purpose; but we neither can, nor do we ever feel that we would, even if we possibly could, exchange our own intellectual consciousness for that of any other being; simply because we know that we should thereby annihilate our self-identity, and so abolish the one pivot upon which everything else hangs, or by which, in fact, such things, are anything at all to us. It is the intellectual consciousness alone, therefore, that strictly constitutes our very essence, and is, indeed, the only veritable self; without which we must account ourselves, as it were, nothing; though all the vital functions should go on as usual, as they even do in deepest sleep, or utter stupor; when all is still governed by the same exactitude

of design, as is seen in the rest of the universe, and equally points, certainly not to any mere concurrence of elective affinities—except as a means under some higher agent, or to any powers properly belonging to matter or ourselves; but to the eternal presence of a supreme unsleeping consciousness, infinitely transcending our own, intimately permeating every atom of the universe, and enveloping, with its laws and active principles, all those so-called involuntary yet spontaneously acting organs, over which it was no idle hypothesis, or far-fetched form of expression, for the great physician, Van Helmont, to have said, that an Archeus, or presiding spirit, ruled. That is to say, in plainer language, that the particles of the organisation, could never have been so co-adapted, or grouped so together of themselves, nor yet so ordered by the finite spirits within; otherwise, they must either have been governed by the will of those spirits, or else have been perpetually shooting forth into random forms of growth, or merely seeming arrangement, through the casual and unintelligent action of matter alone, forms such as seem accidentally to occur when its particles are tossed about by any unmeaning blind force; whereas, on the contrary, these structures, and co-operative functions, indicate a contrivance for definite objects, such as could only have proceeded from an intellectual consciousness at least commensurate with the results, and which did not, therefore, emanate from the creatures so endowed, far less from their constituent molecules; but has evidently involved them from without, and determined the nature and attributes of their whole being, without their own

consent, or even cognizance; all such organisations, in short, being mere visible expressions of the preceding intelligent cause, invisible, intangible, and imponderable, like our own souls, and like them, only appreciable by others in the voluntary manifestation of the results. For, as already observed, the thinking and thought-perceiving soul, subsists in a sphere, or nature of its own, rife with originative and conscious activity, and is thus quite as distinct from all those bodily organs, and their processes, though they be so necessary to its welfare in this life, even as it is distinct from the rest of the external universe, which is also equally necessary to the life, and it could no more maintain the growth and nourishment of the frame-work by any power of its own than it could control the motions of the heavenly bodies, or the winds and tides of the earth; though it may acquire, by experience and reason, some knowledge of the laws of both, and imitate, in some slight degree, the all-efficient Originator of those laws, in motive and in act. Left to itself, we know that the organisation must inevitably perish; and that, while the mind, directed by instincts, can sustain the body, by supplying its needs, it nowise can control the vital functions; except by conforming to their fixed laws: and if such vital powers and processes surpass all reach of the human spirit, how infinitely more do they surpass all the admitted molecular forces of matter, except as impressed thereon by a supreme governing intelligence! Those reasoners who *will* cling to matter alone as the supreme source or one essential condition of all being, and who *will* insist that all forms of sentiment

and thought are but subtle emanations consequent upon certain, as yet, undiscovered chemical or other reactions amongst the particles of nervous structure, are wont to compare the mind to the other imponderables in nature as to subtlety of action, and their evolution from the reactions amongst such particles of matter. Yet, again, we are to remember that what are called the imponderables amongst material bodies, such as heat and electricity, having been made to seek for an equilibrium in their distribution, diffuse themselves universally throughout all such bodies more or less, the particles of which become imbued with their essence and energies. But mind acts towards matter according to no such law. It can and does impress the evidences of itself upon external bodies ; but only by subordinating the laws of nature to its own purposes of intention and will ; conveying none of its own essence or energies to the particles ; but merely using them as plastic but passive agents, and as means to attain ends, the meaning of which is ultimately conveyable to mind alone, as instanced in the clock, the musical instrument, the building, the book, and innumerable other matters. And the same conclusion, as already observed, is applicable to the Almighty, as a Spirit operating throughout all the realms of nature ; but with this difference, that the laws are not only subordinated ; but also ordained, by Him.

VIII. Thus, then, so far as the merely animal organisation of man goes, it is to be viewed as a divinely created mechanism, or self-regulating living laboratory, the unconscious, and unsleeping operations of which are made to be subservient to the higher ends of his more

independent, and therefore morally responsible conscious being ; while, as for those special senses which bring his conscious being into more immediate connection with the properties of the outer world, they are simply recipients and conductors of impressions, that is to say, impressions from without, as contra-distinguished from the truly innate emotions and faculties, of the inner consciousness itself. So, while the eye dwells directly upon forms and colours : while the ear delights in harmony of sounds : while the sense of smell revels in delicious odours : the palate in sweet flavours, and every other desire of the sensuous heart, yearning after its particular outward object, finds it in the material world ; the higher, or super-sensuous reason, meets with its appropriate use, and enjoyment, not in grasping at mere concrete bodies or facts ; but in discovering general laws, principles, abstract truths, and relations of wise and beneficent moral contrivance ; beyond the cognizance of mere material sense ; while the diviner hopes, and assurances of the inmost spirit feed upon that internal and ethereal fountain of faith in the Orderer of the present, and future of being which is inseparable from the healthy, moral constitution ; the poet only expressing a matter of fact, when he sings—

“ Hope springs eternal in the human breast,”

it being a faith or confidence in the kindred power from which it feels itself to be derived, and fortified by reason, as grounded on the principle of universal experience, that nothing is found to have been made without its use and purpose ; and so leading to the conclusion that to be

thus once, is, in one form or other, to be so for ever ; an inference strengthened by the collateral fact that we are conscious of a mental thirst and appetite for things hidden and afar off, an appetite that can never be thoroughly satisfied in this life, nay, nor in all time to come, however great may be the spiritual exaltation through time and eternity.

IX. It is, then, this moral consciousness of his diviner faculties and feelings, operating, as they do, above the spheres of materiality and definite time, soaring beyond the common interests of life, and piercing, as it were, into an eternity which is governed by spiritual power, wisdom, and love, that makes man look with an eye of mental dominion, but accompanied with responsibility, not only on his own present portion of nature : but also infinitely beyond it ; however much he may shrink into insignificance before nature's God ; who, indeed, with, and by, all those gifts, bestowed such mental dominion upon him, and of which this consciousness is the express fruit, bearing within itself the germ of the delegated dominion upon earth over all other creatures, and of his hopes of an hereafter, such as shall enable his expanded faculties to rise more and more towards the divine perfection. For he knows that this universe is to him thus beautiful and sublime ; not simply because it is composed of space and matter beyond all limit, nor because it is so admirable in all its lines and colourings : since of such things, the lower animals, with all the perfection of their senses, take no note ; but because, by a sense of moral affinity, and by a moral light, he is able to behold, in its entire


economy, a transcript, so far as he may read it, of the Divine Soul ; because it shines, to his eye, as the work of an omniscient spirit ; without whose ever present guidance, all those rolling suns and systems, and all the active organisms around him, would be merged into a silent chaos, and blotted into utter darkness. Therefore, though partially clogged and chained to this transient, and limited form and dwelling of clay, he feels that the human soul is yet free to a relatively infinite extent ; and not to be dwarfed under any comparison with the immensity of the material universe. On the contrary, the understanding, even as it now is, shoots forth into boundless space, penetrates by subtle analysis the recesses of matter to grasp that spirit of mind-begotten law which governs there, and launches into the infinite intricacies of ideal mathematical forms, ideal numbers, ideal harmonies of sound, and pure idealities of imagination and moral sentiment, unconfined by the mere tabernacle from which it wings its flight, and which is its present habitation, and exquisitely fit, yet not fittest possible home—being a mere point, or centre of material fixation, as it were, from which innumerable radiations of thought thus rush into the infinities of space, and time, number, form, and feeling, to drink in those floods of knowledge, the light of which, without adding the fraction of a grain to the weight of the body—probably the very reverse—is thus to become an integral portion of the mind itself, expanding its power and brilliancy indefinitely, and exalting it, if one may so speak, almost to the order of angelic or seraphic being, the innate faculties being only, in fact,

developed to their proper stature by this study of the works of the Divine Author, from whom they themselves are also derived, and in whom they “live, and move, and have their being.”

X. But for this admission, at the outset, of the natural force and subtlety of the human spirit, and its ability to recognise a force and subtlety of spirit infinitely beyond its own, within itself, and in the whole fabric of creation, the matter contained in this work would have no basis, and consequently no useful, or substantial meaning. But the admission is confidently demanded, as of a fact ; because, though the existence of innate ideas may well be denied, so far as ideas are mental products and related to external objects, there are certainly innate faculties for forming such ideas, innate sources of feeling and action, and innate laws or principles by which the mind is forced to accept certain conclusions according to certain evidences ; just as certainly as our senses are forced by similar laws, to recognise, in conjunction with mind, the existence of their own perceptions, and the objects of such perceptions. Both, like all other imperfect powers, left so much to their own guidance, under a sense of free-will, and judgment, and with such a capacity for further and further knowledge, are necessarily liable to doubt and error under circumstances of difficulty ; and both, as already observed, require education, and verified experience, and reflection, for their full development ; so as clearly to distinguish different objects and thoughts from one another ; but, upon a general review of life, they are found to be trustworthy, and exquisitely fitted for their ends ; or, at least,

they are the most trustworthy agencies known to us at present, and we can neither ignore them, nor venture beyond their boundaries, without being at once plunged into an abyss that shall exhibit either, in the one case, of morbid scepticism, a mere blank of darkness, or else, in the other, of morbid credulity, myriads of flickering phantasms, changeable, evanescent, and inconsistent as in a dream; the first extreme tending to idiotize the mind, and the second to madden it. But, indeed, as already observed, the very difficulty of arriving at truths renders them all the more certain to us; and, if darkness, and sleep, and dreaming, had no other uses in nature, they would, at least, subserve the important end of strengthening our convictions as to substantial realities whether of a physical, or spiritual kind. For, if objects never faded out of sight, and, if our lives were one continuous state of watchfulness, we might possibly conclude, having no basis of contrast on which to found our discriminative cognitions, that all were but one prolonged dream, and one constant state of phantasy; but by the ever-alternate fading and reappearing of objects, and the discovery that we may have the most vivid subjective impressions, independently of existing circumstances; while circumstances may also exist without, at the time, making any impression on the consciousness; we are taught, both to distinguish the imaginary from the real object, and the fancied from the true impression. So, we come to cultivate a self-rectifying judgment, by cautiously reviewing every subject and object from all possible points, and not only so, but also through the medium of innumerable other minds; being


thus led, even through the portals of a sound self-distrust, to the acquisition of remote as well as fundamental certitudes, founded, not only upon the basis of our own consciousness, but upon the corroborative evidences of millions upon millions of witnesses, and running through periods of thousands of years. This is familiarly illustrated by the comparatively enduring and unvarying facts of astronomy, geography, and other branches of natural physical knowledge, and those more simple, and perfectly immutable mathematical conclusions, that have been drawn from them by all peoples in all times. Individual men are born and die, and millions upon millions of other objects are perpetually perishing or changing; but sun, and moon, and alp, and ocean, are, in their general features, still, to collective mankind, as they ever were; nay, even such as seem to vanish from view, like the comets, &c.; still reappear in time to assure us of their stability even amidst change of form or position; and so also, in a metaphysical point of view, the intuitive consciousness of a spiritual, or thinking and judging power within self, and the rational, if not intuitive, sense of a supreme spiritual, or thinking and judging power above and beyond self, spring up for ever within every fairly developed human soul; only to be corroborated, and verified by millions of other capable minds from one age to another; so that this conviction of our minds being related to an infinite spirituality, even as the material of our bodies is related to the boundless physical universe, becomes an inseparable attribute of man, so soon as he is capable of apprehending his own general nature, and the



general nature of the circumstances amidst which he is placed. And, as it is another plain fact that, in handling all such questions, the appeal is from man to man, or from consciousness to consciousness; so, for present purposes, the mental instincts, experience, and judgment of man must form the criterion of the doctrines propounded, be the absolute fulness and perfection of the truth what it may; since that can be contained within the Divine Mind alone, and can never possibly be known to us as finite beings; however more and more of it we may acquire in the course of time, or through eternity.

XI. Yet, just as a bubble of air, a drop of water, or a particle of sand, is indicative of the general nature of the entire mass to which it respectively belongs, so these present and limited glimpses of time and space, and of the physical forces, subordinated to the spiritual powers and intentions within the universe, afford to the mind such Pisgah heights as carry its views into the region of absolute Eternity and Immensity, there to exhibit for its contemplation a supreme source of spiritual Being and action to which all the other metaphysical powers and mathematical laws, and all the mechanical and chemical forces of nature are subjected; from which, in fact, these and all the manifestations of life and thought, and the light of language, as the expression of thought, flow forth, being the very ultimate essence of all such mind and meaning; of which all other secondary objects are but partial expositions or obscure utterances—mere things, in fact, as contradistinguished from the primal Thought-Power that has produced them and sustains them, and

which is alone, as an adequate cause thereof, acceptable by mind; recognising, as it does, such works to be of its own kind, though infinitely beyond its individual contrivance or execution. For, just as a noble piece of architecture, or a sublime or beautiful painting or statue, is felt to be such, not from the material mass entering, or even touching, our bodies, but only from the ideas which it is the means of conveying from the mind of the projector to that of the spectator, so the infinitely greater sublimities and beauties of material and spiritual nature are but exponents of the Divine mind to us; and, as the soul of the human projector, though personally unknown to us, is thus the lesser Neuma, or machinational spirit of design in the lesser work, so the Divine Being, though far less personally known, is the supreme Neuma or machinational spirit of design in His own infinite and glorious creation. It is thus, under the light of intellect, and through an instinctive feeling and act of moral affinity in both cases, that we get behind the curtain-work of visible appearances, and obtain a more direct cognition of the really efficient power which has produced them; for, if the human mind had not itself possessed this secondary faculty for lesser inventive arrangements, it never could have even guessed or dreamed of any such primary and all-efficient energy of spirit producing and sustaining the whole scheme of creation, and appealing to it, through that scheme, with a silent but unmistakeable expressiveness, which, as no language can adequately represent, so no sane mind can possibly ignore; or, to use another form of speech equally appropriate, this silent



expressiveness is the "still voice" addressed to us universally, and translated by each one into his own tongue, according to his ability. For, just as the human organisation of words called language is the medium through which men express their thoughts to such as can understand it, so the Divine organisation of things, called nature, is the medium through which God speaks to all who have a like understanding of His deeper meaning and spiritual intent.

XII. Certainly, it may be averred, in relation to such inferences, and the sources from which they are derived, that, so accustomed does the mind often become to things even the most astonishing, that many, both in earlier and later ages, wanting the light of revelation, and even common reflection, have looked upon such objects with "brute unconscious gaze," and not gathered from them any spiritual, or real mental knowledge, far less any true and worthy idea of a God. Yet such a statement, though it could not affect the present argument as one addressed to minds of quite a different nature, cannot be advanced in respect to human beings as a race; since, on the contrary, such a light has never ceased to shine upon the civilized world throughout all history; and it is also questionable if ever there has been discovered any isolated people so utterly barbarous as not to have recognised the existence of a Supreme Being, or supernatural metaphysical power of one kind or another, to whom they were responsible; even if they fell, in their groping efforts, into such fantastic aberrations from propriety, as we witness in the worship of Fetishes, or of Mumbo-Jumbo. As has been said

of such isolated and untutored savages, they think they

“See God in clouds, and hear him in the wind ;”


as so, indeed, they do, if the expression be interpreted aright. Or, in a less marked degree, and even in the midst of high civilization, there may be, as we have seen, minds of a certain order, possessing a keen sensuous reason, and wielding well the logic of plain apparent physical facts,

“ Whose souls proud science may have taught to stray,
Far as the solar walk, or milky way,”

which yet have comparatively little appreciation of abstract truths, or of the inner spirit, or deeper meaning hidden, in one sense, under the crust of such merely material facts, though in another, speaking out from amongst them, with a voice as distinct, as it is subtle. They may perceive forms and colours; but have little sense of beauty, grace, or harmonious proportion. They hear sounds, but do not feel the refining and exalting charms of music, nor know its real source, in feelings that otherwise are utterable only in shouts, sighs, tears, and groans, and are too subtle and profound for ordinary speech. They witness the grandest natural and historical scenes; but find no spirit of poetry or of heroism shining from within them; though such spirit be as much a reality, as the stone that lies before us in our walks: and, in like manner, they see the most complicated, and minute arrangements, all so ordered as to attain in perfection, one set end; and yet, being either mentally deficient in subjective impressions

and emotions, or else so subjected to the tyranny of other minds, as to allow themselves to be artificially trained to refuse credence to them, fail to recognise aright the real meaning, or inner spirit of design and purpose, which at once strikes the higher or supersensuous reason and moral sense, as something akin, though infinitely superior, to their own originating or inventive faculty interwoven with sentiment, or sympathetic feeling, and conscience, or the sense of moral right.

XIII. This higher, and active, or synthetical reason, indeed, as distinguished from a merely passive receptivity and judgment of outward appearances as they come and go, is never contented with observing and comparing facts, simply as facts ; but looking to the manner in which they are grouped together, and arriving, by induction, at the recognition of laws of order, immediately proceeds to ask itself what is the intent, and meaning of this, or that arrangement, governed by such orderly laws. Because it feels that the discovery of such intent and meaning reveals the inner spirit of the whole scheme, and turns a comparative chaos into a world, not only of beauty and and harmony ; but of knowledge, and wisdom, and love. It is the cypher which changes what is apparently a sort of nothing, or, at best, a gross assemblage of diverse material bodies, into something which is not only infinite ; but infinitely beautiful, as in Newton's conclusion regarding the universal gravitation of matter, as suggested by the simple falling of an apple, or other such body : as in the theories of elective affinity, definite combination, and atomic proportion in chemical science ; in the




botanical classifications of Linnæus, and the mineral arrangements of Werner; or, as in Goethe's inference, from certain animal remains, as to the universal and orderly analogies, amidst all the infinite variety of living organisations. It is thus the key to the book of the inner life of nature, and lets in upon the otherwise unintelligible scroll, a light that opens up vistas of meaning—vistas so deep that the light itself, or rather our power of following it, dies out in their interminable prolongations; yet not without satisfying the mind as to the infinite expanses that lie beyond its direct cognizance, dim and dark as those expanses may appear to be. For, indeed, they appear dim and dark to us, not because the "light that lighteth eternity" is there wanting; but, just as in ordinary material inquiries; because our own powers of mental vision, and our own mental glasses of science, and philosophy, fail us at a certain boundary-line of intermediate, yet only passive, causation; beyond which stretches an infinite abyss of darkness, through which, however, are yet seen, by moral affinity, and by a necessary principle of reason, the continuously connective glimmerings of that primary, all-efficient, and sole possible source of active causation—that light of lights, before whose unapproachable lustre the angels are said to "veil their faces with their wings." It is even as with the bright stars that are beheld by him who is in a deep and dark mine; for he sees but a very little way, if at all, where he is actually placed; and also, through the long tube of the dark shaft, he discerns no light of day above, though the whole firmament of heaven be blazing with it; but,

afar off, and beyond those merely intermediate, though immeasurable realms of space, he discovers those more distant sources of the universal light that are invisible amidst the open glare of day. Not that this physical similitude, or rough analogy, between the material and the mental light, is any necessary proof of the metaphysical truth respecting the cognition of the Godhead as a Spiritual Creator; for that rests upon its own surer basis of abstract reason; but yet it affords a familiar illustration of our perception of more distant material objects; while nearer ones may be quite obscure, such as may better satisfy the class of observers and thinkers above alluded to, who are so fond of the too often delusive aphorism that "seeing is believing,"—whereas, in fact, the eye of the body is worthless, if its impressions be not corrected by the eye of the mind, or supersensuous reason, and so saved from being the constant victim of jugglery and phantasm in whatever direction it may turn. Besides which, the facts giving evidence of a God are ever present; as well as in the past; and near unto us, as well as afar off.

XIV. And, although the observation of plain apparent physical facts, when thus rectified by reason, be the chief human foundation of all inductive scientific truth: yet, so far as such observation were restricted to the sphere of the mere senses; man, a philosophically constituted being by nature, and therefore inwardly impelled by nature to seek after causes and meanings, could see nothing superior to himself as an intellectual agent within this universe; which were quite absurd, and utterly at variance with

what strikes home to the higher, or supersensuous reason, as the chief of all facts and causes. Certainly, it cannot be denied, even by the most sensuous, that there are facts immaterial, as well as material, subjective as well as objective, rational as well as sensible, and for the elucidation of such facts, and of their relation to one another, another mode of conclusion, besides that of the senses and induction, namely, that of the pure consciousness, and the inferential and deductive reason, must be, and is, habitually, adopted. Without the exercise of such kind of thought, man, as has just been said, from his unrivalled superiority on this globe, so far as the simply visible and tangible are concerned, might be viewed, either as the author of the things and beings that surround him; or else as the representative of the culmination, of all their collective powers by a gradual upward self-development, or by, in other words, a sort of eclectic concurrence of their atoms, in order, of themselves, or through a self-contrived chemistry and mechanism, to assume a higher state of being, and so finally arrogate the faculty of reason as the latest out-come of such a blind molecular commotion. But there are not only no materials to build up either the one supposition, or the other; but, on the contrary, there is positive and direct proof of their impossibility; even though granting, for the moment, that the first was not felt intuitively to be an absurdity; and that the second, viewed aright, or as a secondary operation of the primal influence, would not at all affect the question of a First Moral Cause any more than the apparently spontaneous formation of crystals, or of vegetable or



animal tissues and secretions. For, to effect a creative result, there is implied not only intention; but a perfect control over all the elements, and agencies of the operation; but here, as men, or finite spirits, and the same must apply to all finite spirits, however exalted, we are encountered at once by an incomprehensible immensity, and by innumerable uncontrollable forces, existing therein; so that we are driven out of any attempted intrenchment of self-reliance within the domains of mere sense, or even human or angelic intellect, however exalted in degree; and compelled to perceive that there are other domains, boundless and infinite, that are far beyond the reach, or influence of ourselves, or of any other visible, or conceivable secondary power in the universe; and, therefore, referrible only to some supreme, and invisible influence, infinitely above us, both in kind and degree, such as we are now contemplating, and whose spiritual source, or fountain-head, we call God. Man, in short, can never possibly conclude, in a state of sanity, though all physicians know that there are sundry men of genius who are insane, that his is the supreme soul of creation; while yet he must accept the existence of such a supreme soul, as inevitably as he accepts any of those other metaphysical, or mathematical axioms which are deniable only by those anomalous minds, exceptional, and yet, as has been already said, not really exceptional, who affect to deny their own being, and all else, and therefore object even to metaphysicians, and mathematicians, as being too imaginative and dreamy; self-evident propositions being to them not evident, for the very reason that they are self-

evident, and require no so-called logical proof beyond their simple apprehension by the pure mental consciousness, wherever such mental consciousness exists.

XV. It has certainly been asserted, in regard to such speculations on the Supreme Spirit of the universe, that the whole body of mind, being, in such people's opinion, as one pervading and yet infinitely varying cosmic essence, man is only permanent and immortal in God, while God Himself, or so much of Him, is perishable or mortal in man, and other material and immaterial forms of passing conscious being; thus making the difference between them to consist in a mere matter of varying conditions and circumstances, with an universal, and perpetual duration of essential inner power, and a like universal and perpetual transmutation of external form. But the human self-consciousness, or sense of self-identity, at once rejects so groundless a supposition; not only from intuition, and from want of all evidence thereof; but on the equally self-evident, and eternal necessary fact of the certainty of some source of really originative causation; yet unquestionably not existing within itself, except as a limited, secondary, and derived faculty, as a sort of semblance of its Omnipotent Fatherhood, the very existence of which, conjoined to a body, and amidst a universe, over neither of which, it has any real or primary control, proves the preceding, and present existence of some all-potent Originator and Controller, thus capable of begetting and sustaining this intellectual consciousness in man, along with all his bodily functions, and all the other works of nature. For, as regards the

supersensuous reason, the abstract truth above alluded to with respect to the simple Being of God, as an intellectual and moral cause, which it grasps, and from which flow so many clear necessary deductions as to the attributes, is founded on the metaphysical fact that it is not only not in the nature of mind to conceive the possibility of the existence of anything without a cause, but a positive certitude of reason that cause must be wherever anything else is; though the bond of connection between it and the results may very seldom be so self-evidently efficient and necessary as one and one in forming the complement of two, or two halves in constituting a whole. Consequently, by an infinite process of retrogression, it must recognise a first, and really efficient cause; however many intermediate, passive, and subordinate causes (which themselves are mere effects) may not be discoverable amidst the fathomless gulphs which it encounters in its endless journey. But, as the first recognition of the necessity of cause still continues to involve the idea of some deeper and deeper preceding cause, or else the absurdity of no cause at all, which would be quite inconsistent with the undeniable metaphysical axiom from which we started: we are ultimately driven to the one conclusion that that First, and only possible pure and real Cause, is necessarily Eternal. This axiom, therefore, regarding causation, arising out of an ineradicable principle of mind, being necessarily accepted by mind; unless it chooses to repudiate its own powers and its own nature, all ulterior consequences must be known to be traceable, even though not traced, to the one Eternal First Cause:

though, as to certain attributes of such Eternal First Cause, beyond those of necessary Being, self-subsistence, omniscience, and omnipotence which *must* characterise it; these are of the nature of inductions, drawn from the results thereof, that lie before our eyes and understanding; and as generalisations of experience from countless matters of fact, when we infer, for instance, from the nature of our own faculties and feelings, and the design, and evident objects of creation, as from an infinite array of circumstantial proofs, clearly apprehended, that such original and Eternal First Cause, is Spiritual in its essence, and infinitely replete with wisdom, goodness, and the absolute perfection of all truth. Man, in fact, in thus first grasping the infinite, in combination with a sense and knowledge of his own intellectual and moral power, is forced on, by a mental compulsion, to recognise the absolute infinitude, and its absolutely Infinite and Moral Ruler; for, once impelled upon the track, there is no limit or stoppage to the progress either in the nature of things, or in the nature of his own mind, and, far less, in the infinitude itself. This bodily organisation, with its senses, is certainly confined within limited space, and time, which, however, are but measurable portions of the infinite; but the thinking spirit, though often obliged—on account of its chief instrument in complex matters being reason, instead of an intuitive perception—to halt and ponder over difficulties, and amidst darkness, flies, notwithstanding, through the immensities of space and time, unchecked by any definite limitation in itself, or in the universe which it explores, and within and around

which it recognises the ever-working manifestations of that Spirit of Eternity, whose existence is the only possible answer to the problem of its own derived being and faculties. Those who object to all abstract proofs of this kind would, doubtless, assert, as others have done before them, that we can have no sufficiently distinct idea of the absolute and infinite in such matters; and that we are thus making eternity, and immensity, and the Being and attributes of Godhead to rest upon our own convictions, as a mere human inference. And also, that, as man can think, as they say, only within finite space and time, he cannot fix upon the existence of any cause lying beyond them, without committing an act of absurdity by speaking of matters quite out of his own sphere; as if such sphere were his individual natural life alone. But such language does not express the truth; for man, as a spiritual essence, is confined, as has been already shown, within no sphere of the kind, and the absurdity, as a sort of play upon words, lies upon their own side; for we are perpetually mentally moving, in time and space, both backwards and forwards, without being ever able either to get beyond them, or keep within them, or come to any sort of limit at all; being, as they are, merely relative and indefinite portions of that one positive eternity of infinitude in which we, therefore, know ourselves to be immersed, and which, though necessarily incomprehensible, is so far from being inconceivable, as they say, that the impossibility of conception consists altogether in the attempt to imagine any limit to its absolute boundlessness, either as to space or time. Incomprehensible and uncompassable,


therefore, it may be called, these terms being the very essence of its designation to finite beings; but inconceivable it is not, for the power of conception itself, or its possessor, mind, is relatively infinite, and cannot be bounded by any finite lines, or confined within any distinct limit; though the senses may be, and undoubtedly are. But we not only see space and matter; but also evidences of infinite power, activity, and intelligence, and so, while mind must admit the absolute infinitude of the universe, it can recognise in God alone the absolute infinitude and plenitude of power and wisdom.

XVI. And then, again, we do not aver that God is existent, simply on the ground of such inference, and as if such inference were an efficient cause, and not a mere expression of thought springing from a perception of a preceding actual reality; but that the inference only constitutes the foundation and essence of our individual conviction that God is, and must ever have been, and continue to be, the primal spiritual essence of the universe, which though it be infinite in extent, as just observed, yet entirely depends on God, who alone is infinite in power. To say that the Being of God was based upon a human, or any other deduction, were purely absurd; for, on the contrary, the deduction itself is based upon the evidence of the Being actually under contemplation; like all other deductions great or small, which are but expressions of the mental evidences of the phenomenal truth, even as the phenomena are expressions, or evidences of their cause. Otherwise, it might just as well be said that, as the animal creation has no cognition of a God, or even of the true

nature of man, or of the universe, only because of the absence of thought; and as the human being has such cognition, only from the presence of thought; therefore, the existence of Deity, man, and universe is a mere offshoot or fanciful conception of the human understanding. So, in like manner, mistaking—as is too often done even by very able persons, such as we are now speaking of—mistaking, I say, the mere cognition of the entity for the entity itself, the existence of colours might be denied on the authority of the blind, the reality of sounds on the authority of the deaf; and so on, until every impression of sense, every perception of mind, and every inference of the reason, yea, necessary and eternal facts themselves, should be viewed as mere phantasms of an imagination, the existence of which, however, in that case, would certainly be more wonderful and inexplicable than any of the other matters which so puzzle and baffle us in our investigations, by thus making it of itself a sort of creative god, yet so utterly mechanical and automatic as to be steeped in ignorance of its own works, and quite unconscious of its own powers of invention.

XVII. For, indeed, the most sensuous and materialistic observer, who alone, with characteristic incongruity, would urge such an argument in his devotion to the visible and tangible, &c., has no more evidence of the presence of the physical universe, or of his own body, or his own mind, the which, with equal incongruity, he never denies, though viewing it as a mere resultant of the function of brain-matter, than is afforded by this logic of the internal light, or pure intellectual consciousness, lead-

ing us up to higher and higher sources of causation; until we feel that we have reached the eternal, the infinite, the omnipotent, and omniscient unity; though, except by clinging to this cognition of a primal cause, only to be lost in so uncompassable an immensity. Without it, all would be a blank *to him*, as to a log of wood, or a stone; yet, certainly, we do not aver, as he,—by being consistent with his own mode of reasoning would do, and so invert his former conclusion,—we do not aver that the existence of the physical universe depends on *his* recognition of it; but that it is this rational conviction of its positive reality that makes it what it is *to him*, or seems to be, if he like that expression better, namely, a visible, or phenomenal manifestation of the laws which govern it, and himself, and consequently, of their Divine Author, as the prime intellectual source of the causation of such laws of order, and such complex uniformity of action. We say that such things *seem*, when the confidence in our own being is weak, as in such thinkers, who, while exalting brain, would yet so cripple its functions, and suspect the reality of its fruits; and when it is strong, we not only say that they seem, but that they verily are; though they may not actually be quite as they seem to us; yet certainly nothing less; but rather, without doubt, something infinitely more; seeing that our sources of information are limited by the limitation of our senses, and our powers of understanding, which might be so multiplied and exalted as to educe knowledge of an infinity of fresh qualities in all bodies, and other objects of perception. Yet, even as it is, now and here, we have,




by means of rational inference, or deduction, a positive assurance of innumerable matters as certitudes, without having any specific, or distinctive knowledge of them as individual entities, or objects for identification ; and just as we can positively affirm, without any danger of contradiction, even from such wranglers, the existence of some remote ancestor, without being able to define his characteristic personal qualities, further than that he must, as an intermediate author of ourselves, have possessed, at least, the essentials or potentials of our own being ; so we can as positively affirm the existence of the Great Author of all things, even without knowing more of Him than that, as the prime and original source of all Being, He must possess within Himself, not only all the powers and energies that can be found within the universe, but also infinitely more ; inasmuch as such Divine energy is exercised from Eternity to Eternity, and far beyond the reach of all our present investigations, the fields of ether being extended beyond our furthest ken, without our possessing any ability to reap any intimate knowledge of them, however relatively infinite may be the present general view, and however obvious the general features of that boundless expanse, which comes under our cognizance, and of which every one knows more or less in time and space, according to his respective powers and efforts.

XVIII. Yet in either case, be these views great or small, or more or less perfect, it is the mental consciousness of a reasonable conviction that must determine our acceptance of every fact and principle in nature, involving,

as that term does, the entire circle of the sciences and their objects; whether these be understood to a greater or lesser degree, or even not scientifically understood at all. For, we are carried irresistibly, by a mental instinct of moral affinity, beyond these phenomena, and also beyond their laws, towards the spiritual source from which, as reasonable souls, having a direct and certain knowledge of such peculiar powers within ourselves, we cannot but feel or conceive that all such laws of orderly design, as means to attain ends, have sprung; and, though we can only see in part, and can never compass the real complete body of truth, or such absolute infinitude of space, and such absolute plenitude of power, and wisdom, even were we to live and labour through an endless eternity of being; yet it is on that very ground of the consciousness of never being possibly able to compass such absolute boundlessness of Being, and such spiritual profusion of creative activity, that our supersensuous reason, apprehending the congenerous essence, and, at the same time, feeling its own share thereof to be but an infinitesimal part, accepts it as the greatest of all existing realities, from which it is utterly incapable of escaping, let the mind carry itself whithersoever it may. For within, and around, and beyond the visible in creation, we find irresistible proof of the invisible and spiritual; both within ourselves and transcendantly beyond us; that within us being limited, though also relatively infinite, and that beyond us, being absolutely infinite and incomprehensible; but both being of an essence of which we have this intense internal consciousness,

without its being demonstrable to the physical senses—as the materialists think it ought to be, if existing at all—or by any other external, or secondary form of proof, such as those self-crippled logicians demand, of whom we have already spoken. The functions of such senses, indeed, so far from being the source or masters of the consciousness, are included within it; so much so that, without it, they were mere dead machines like mirrors, or unused telescopes, &c., and reckoning, as one may say, for nought; notwithstanding their inestimable value when serving as adjuncts, or instruments, of the living and intellectual consciousness. Either, therefore, to reduce the evidences of the intellectual consciousness, and supersensuous reason, to a cipher, in respect to those of the senses; or, on the other hand, to allow them unlimited license of invention, or speculation, in defiance of the senses, were equally fallacious, as already observed, and the profound contrast that exists between the truly philosophic, or broad natural thinker, and that utter sceptic who doubts, or affects to doubt, all about himself and the universe,—that extreme materialist who accepts the universe and his body, as reacting on each other, and nothing else, except as effects of such reciprocal reaction,—and that extreme spiritualist who trusts in all things to wild subjective emotions, and loose, unbidden or ungoverned thoughts only, and disregards matter and its qualities and laws, is this, that he blends, after the manner of nature herself, all their separate and artificially moulded characters into one, in his own more comprehensive, and better co-ordinated mind; so that, while he

accepts the physical universe, and his body as positive facts, by an intuitive confidence in the sensible touch and mental perception of their reality, and his soul also, as a still more certain and absolute fact, though not without having examined the foundation of such conviction and found it to lie in the profoundest depth of the very self, as the affirmative essence of conscious, and active Being, without which all else ceases to be apparent; he yet seeks to correct all errors of sense, imagination, and the ordinary understanding by the exercise of a supreme judgment, or discriminative reason, regulating the value of his own first impressions, and deductions by diligent re-examination, and a comparison of them with those of others; but never ceasing to refer everything to the ultimate decision of his rational consciousness; even while recognising a spiritual consciousness infinitely beyond his own in Creation. For his knowledge of the supreme consciousness can be gained only by the exercise of his own, and such knowledge tells him that the supreme consciousness is, in its integrity, quite incomprehensible. He, therefore, who occupies himself sincerely and steadfastly, in pondering over such solemn questions, and expressing his sentiments thereon, thus feels that he is simply a human spirit addressing himself to kindred spirits; and it is this powerful conviction of the existence of a Deity, or Supreme Spirit, derived from his own self-consciousness, and its objects, that inspires him with confidence, while endeavouring to bring such conviction home to the consciousness of others; not, certainly, by making the Divine Effulgence any the more manifest



intrinsically, for that were impossible, but merely by unscaling the eyes of a dormant, or artificially perverted reason, and inducing it to exercise its natural, and unsophisticated powers amongst the other powers of Creation; so that by the exercise of such attentive reflection, in this one respect at least, it may see as he sees, feel as he feels, and think as he thinks, under a pure and earnest devotion to the spirit of Truth, in all possible clearness, and mental freedom, from morbid doubt on the one hand, and from morbid credulity on the other.

XIX. For, just as in contemplating any more or less complicated matter in nature, or art, be it an object of scientific inquiry, or an extended landscape, or a ship, or machine, or an involved array of mathematical figures or numbers, or the fabric of a great commonwealth, it is only by long fixity of attention, that the relation of the various parts can be accurately perceived; so that their equable adjustments, and, finally, their prime governing principle can be firmly grasped; and, as the mind that has gone through this protracted process of self-discipline, noting contrasts and resemblances that are less perceptible by others, can the more easily make these things apparent to casual observers and thinkers; so, in the contemplation of this greatest of all schemes, and of all originators, it is only by a continuous fixity of thoughtful attention that even any approximative idea of their infinite grandeur can be realised, or such idea conveyed to those minds who have suffered their finest faculties to sleep amidst the blaze of the living day, and the Living God. He, who is awakened from this sleep of indolent thoughtlessness,

or, it may be, absorption in worldly affairs, or an attention narrowed to limited fields only, or a mere blind and verbal faith, may feel at first dazzled, and, as if involved in darkness and confusion, from the complexity of the results, and the profundity of their causes; but, gradually, as the relation of all things to each other, becomes, by sufficiency of study, apparent to him, he feels a light dawning upon the scene, partly from without, and partly from within: the light from without showing him the objects; but the light from within alone revealing their otherwise hidden meanings. He is thus carried back to the common source of both, as a primal cause, which he certainly feels, by his sense of moral affinity, to be a fountain, not of material but of mental light; the former being only as a creation of the latter, even as he finds it to be a creature subordinated to the requirements of his own body and mind—a thing passive, and unconscious, which he can partially examine into, analyse, and control, and subdue to his own purposes of will and intention—a regal instrument, lent to him by the Lord over all—majestic and dazzling; but still only a passive tool or thing, and not a fit object of worship or adoration, to which certain inquirers, even of this present day, would seek, practically, to elevate it, after the manner of the ancient Persians, &c., or those others devoted to the omnipotence of Apollo; unless they abjure such an insinuation, by boldly declaring, as they certainly would have us infer, that heat is but the analogue of life, and of all other forms of energy,—a convertible term for latent, or patent activity, whatever aspect such activity may

assume,—and that all the phenomena of nature are but the result of a sort of fermentation or other commotion of matter, come how it might, including, not only chemical action, and the action of electricity and magnetism; but also life itself, and intellectual and moral Being. Here, however, they evidently mistake the mechanism for the Mechanician, the resulting entity for the originative Essence, and the creation for the Creator, who must, of necessity, as a Creator, possess intent and purpose which resides, and can reside, in mind alone, and which must, therefore, be the first factor of all things, if it be allowed that these exhibit any proof of purpose at all, and that they do—

“All nature cries aloud through all her works.”

For as, according to the fundamental laws of nature, putting all poetry quite aside, no material body can move of itself; or being moved, can stop of itself, or even move in any other than a straight line of itself, all being so absolutely passive, as to make Newton speak of such passivity as a *vis inertiae*, or, as it were, active power of inertness; and as the only principle in the universe that possesses, according to all experience, any really initiative power of motion, activity, or directive force, is the vital energy, regulated by will and intention, as known intuitively and intimately to ourselves, though only as derived spirits; so no secondary motion, which alone exists in matter, could possibly have first arisen without the previous impulse of some primary mental, supra-material, or metaphysical power, which, taking into

consideration the incalculable consequences of its action throughout the universe, in orderly motion of every conceivable kind, is thus demonstrated to have been, and to be, of a potency of volition and wisdom no other than infinite and eternal; being literally that all-supporting Spiritual Essence, the idea of which lies at the very root of the meaning of those primitive words, indicating mind and soul, and gives them such significance when duly reflected upon, namely, the one only real substance, or *understanding*, from which every other essence and entity hath necessarily sprung, and upon which they all must necessarily rest.

XX. So much for the foundation of this argument on Deity in relation to the human faculties, and their recognition of the principle of rational and spiritual, or active causation, as an innate and prerogated attribute of mind, and sole possible source of any real, or absolute origination; all things else in the universe being merely its subordinated tools, or instruments. Man, in using such tools and instruments, knows that he holds only a derived existence, and derived endowments, under laws and conditions imposed upon him from above; but, at the same time, from all his innate principles, confirmed by experience, he is made equally to feel the conviction that the God, or Supreme Spirit, from whom all comes, is self-existent, self-endowed, and self-conditioned by those eternal laws, reasons, or attributes of rightness and consistency, which are for ever inherent in His Eternal Being.


D. N.



PART SECOND.

OF THE PROGRESS OF THE IDEA CONCERNING GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES, AS EVIDENCED IN THE HISTORY OF RELIGIOUS DOCTRINE.

I. The first serious thought, therefore, regarding a self-consciousness, and its consciousness of outward objects, followed by the first question of "*Whence these things, and whence am I?*" leading towards the affirmatory answer thereto, more or less, as already expounded, had but to strike a chord in one individual of a community, as he lay, perchance, after the exercises of the day, by the brink of some solitary woodland stream, or sea-beach, or lofty rugged rock, and half-dreamily, or abstractedly,—for such waking dreaminess, and abstraction, or the uncurbed activity of the mental faculties with high unbidden, but not loose thoughts, is often akin to inspiration, if it be not what we are to understand by inspiration itself—half-dreamily, I say, in the sense of profound abstraction from bodily wants, and other petty distractions—contemplated the objects already enumerated, until the train of his ideas led him, as they naturally must have done, and actually did, to the lively conviction of the




existence, not only of some grand first, originating cause ; but of some beneficent intelligence infinitely above himself, as Lord and Maker of all. Such a thought, once grasped and expressed, would be instinctively responded to by all of unsophisticated mind ; and thus would commence, and continue, as it really did, the belief in, and worship of, a God, founded upon natural principles, or those of Cosmology in its largest sense, as including the universe of mind, as well as of matter.

II. The manner in which the face of nature, would affect a human being of intelligence, upon seeing it for the first time, is finely pictured in a passage which Cicero has quoted as from some work of so close a reasoner as Aristotle, now lost to the world. The passage is as follows :—“ If there were beings which still inhabited dwellings in the depths of the Earth, and whose houses were adorned with pictures, and statues, and everything which makes those who possess them in abundance be accounted happy ; and, if those beings obtained information of the power and might of the Gods, and were to step out of their concealment, through some opening of the Earth, into the regions which we now inhabit—if they were suddenly to look upon the surface of the Earth, and see the vault of the sky, and to recognize the size of the clouds, and the powers of the winds, and to admire the sun, with its beauty, its magnitude, and its rays ; if, in fine, as soon as night came on, and shrouded the Earth in darkness, they were to see the stars in the sky, the moon with its changes, the rising and setting of the stars, and their continued, regular, and unchanging

course, they would certainly declare that there are Gods, and that these great things are their works."

III. Aristotle is here made to say that the inference would be that "There are *Gods*." Doubtless, he expressed himself merely in accordance with the prevalent notions of his country and age; as the general tenor of his writings does not favour polytheism, in its vulgar sense; but quite the contrary: And, though it may be rebutted, that we seek to express ourselves merely according to those of ours; yet, with all due deference to so great a genius, and to Cicero as well, probability decidedly bears us out so as to make the supposition next to a certainty, that the idea of unity of Being would much rather arise within a primitive and unsophisticated mind than any more complex one of a plurality of powers; which latter induction would rather spring from a more minute observation and analysis of objects, and events, than from the first general impression of grand synthetic results. And, indeed, we also know from history, that the doctrine of a numerous plurality of gods has always advanced and expanded along with semi-civilisation of a material, rather than of a spiritual kind; and never was a characteristic of primitive times, any more than of the most cultivated periods. It is, in fact, quite a middle age barbarism of all times, the result of ambitious efforts, after sophistication of mind, and before the attainment of a truly logical maturity—the accompaniment of a state of restless transition, similar to that of individual persons in youth, or early manhood—an ingenious, artificial, and elaborate grouping of all the accumulated errors and



terrors of imagination, and a system, in short, altogether inconsistent, either with the simplicity of the very early ages of society, or with the greater power, refinement, and correctness of thought, and feeling, belonging to a truly enlightened æra; in contradistinction to one of a dubious casuistical morality, and an equally dubious subtlety of intellect. All this, too, without calling into our service the arithmetical necessity of some first unity being in the mind, before it could produce any multiple, or division thereof.

IV. The first grand idea, then, originating in mind, from the contemplation of creation as a whole, appears to have been something akin to, though not exactly, pantheism, or the belief in one universal Divine Power, penetrating all things, and surrounding, and governing them as an All-in-All; but yet subsisting as a spiritual personality of conscious Being; not such as was later sought to be symbolised by the analytic Greeks in the necessary so-called elements of water, air, earth, and fire, or its great representative the sun, as the one specially necessary condition of existing things; but rather such as was earlier embodied in the Great Pan of Egypt, and other countries, with his creative fecundity, his all-sufficiency of spirit, and the typification of his eternal government of Heaven and Earth, under the emblems of radiant light and heat, and of swiftness and strength irresistible: Of whom, also, it was inscribed on the walls of the temples, "*I am All that was, or is, or shall be, and never by mortal to be unveiled.*" It could not be in the nature of mind, till after further observation in


minuter details, and a more methodical arrangement of objects in their resemblances, differences, and even antagonisms, that any further process of thinking could possibly be carried out, by which, under an inability to reconcile with each other such apparently opposite forces, the attributes of an All-in-All Deity came to be distinguished analytically, by separate, and even opposite qualities; and so to be represented by separate, and even opposite symbols, and impersonations. Thus came the Divine Attributes of Power, Wisdom, and Love, to be represented as distinct Gods; and thus, also, the divine acts of Creation, and Destruction—if so-called Destruction be any real Destruction at all—and the divine productions of Heat, Light, Beauty, Pleasure, Pain, Justice, Mercy and every other such recognisable essence, or entity, along with the supposed local guardianship of woods, fountains, streams, mountains, and valleys, came to be referred to separate divine agencies; which yet, however, were all considered, by more thoughtful minds, as bound up in one infinite and omnipotent grasp of control, as indicated by those divers ancient names, signifying either this Pan, this All-in-All, or Supreme God, as the source of Destiny, or Necessity; but still representing, more or less clearly, that fundamental primitive idea of the necessary truth, which no mysticism could altogether conceal, and no idolatry could altogether obliterate from the minds of its reasoning votaries. Superstition, in its perverted sense, coupled with a perverted ingenuity, might thus invent, for acceptance by the common multitude, and by persons of perverted passions, all manner of supposed lesser, or

secondary gods, including those of human origin, as Heroes and Demigods; though many of these were more as villains than as Heroes, and more as devils than as gods; but it never could shut the eyes of the reflecting mind against an obstinately clinging conviction of the existence of some one God, above all other gods—approaching to the JAH, EHJEH, or I AM of the Hebrews—the infinite and eternal spiritual Presence, without beginning, ever-lasting, and all-powerful.

V. Thus, too, as the early Chaldean shepherds, tending their herds and flocks on the vast plains of Assyria, and resting, as was and is the custom in such genial climates, upon the roofs of their dwellings, contemplated the solemn march of the stars and the planets in that clear blue sky; as these seemed to rise upwards from the east, wheel slowly overhead, and sink again in the west, followed by the sun in a like course; until he, too, should set, and they, again, renew their motions as before; as they observed that some moved in greater, and others in lesser segments of circles, that, while certain orbs were continually changing their positions, others exhibited very little variation in relation to one another; and, as they further observed that the position of the sun and moon, and of this, or that star, or constellation, had some peculiar connection with the seasons and the weather, and all their concomitant circumstances of heat and cold, light and darkness, storm and sunshine, the upspringing and development of grasses, fruits, and flowers, the bringing forth of the young of animals, each having some correlation with the others, they necessarily, and out of their

very ignorance of the mechanical and chemical principles of the various sciences, connected such facts with each other, by something more spiritual, even if also more vague, than the merely secondary laws of natural cause and effect, and proceeded, therefore, simply looking to really efficient, however remote, rather than to intermediate and passive, sources of causation, to view such objects as under the immediate and specific government of certain superior beings, who inhabited those glorious seats of never-failing light, and sped them onwards in their blessed courses from day to day, from year to year, and from age to age, for ever; or, on the other hand, to shroud their glory in occasional eclipse, and thus strike the nations with fear of impending disaster and destruction.

VI. As time advanced, these supposed beings, as subordinate gods, or angels, who might, or might not, but most probably, or, as one may say, doubtless do, exist in countless multitudes, both good and bad, after the manner that we exist ourselves as derivative spirits, came to be made more and more the objects of specific worship; one being preferred by one set of men, and others by others, according to their respective desires, and necessities; or by the same man, at different times, according to his varying circumstances. A further aberration and degradation of idea brought about the worship of the mere objects themselves; rather than of their supposed animating spirits—the hidden essences being eclipsed, in common minds, by their visible types, or material entities; as exemplified in the adoration paid



to the sun, moon, and stars, &c., &c., simply as natural bodies. But, finally, idolatry reached its topmost height, when not only heavenly powers, and the heavenly host, but all the separate faculties, passions, and functions of man himself, as well as numerous animals and plants, were personified and enshrined as very gods; and when an endless variety of figures in wood, stone, metal, or ivory, fashioned, either after the human form, or some monstrous shape of wild imagination, blazed forth in all the array of mysterious types and symbols, with brilliant colourings of gems and gold, derived partly from external nature, and partly from those grotesque combinations of power and weakness; purity and impurity; beauty and deformity; goodness and wickedness; which almost always characterize the human fancy in its half-trained gropings after that which "passeth all understanding." Hence have we those numerous models of grandeur, and beauty, teeming with approximative truth, and high spiritual significance; as well as the uncouth outlines of monstrous, gigantic, and baser idols, each of which characterized the worship of the old Assyrians, Indians, Egyptians, Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Scandinavians, and barbarians of all kinds, both ancient and modern; not even excepting the Hebrews themselves, at certain times and places; but to specify each of which, at due length, would occupy many volumes, and which, therefore, are merely alluded to in this discourse, as matter of passing illustration. Let it serve the present purpose, simply to recollect that, not only were these so-called gods almost innumerable—those adopted by Rome alone

being about thirty thousand—but that each of them, in time, came to be sub-divided into separate individualities, according to their mere moods, or varied acts, as Jupiter Tonans, the enraged Thunderer, and Jupiter Amans, the Loving; Venus Urania, of the Heavens, refined; and Venus Popularia of the Earth, sensual, &c., &c.; and also, that the modes in which they were worshipped were as various as their characters and figures, and the capacities of the different peoples who adored them; graduating from the sublime and awful mysteries connected with the higher divinities of Hindostan, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, down to the awkward grimaces, and jabberings of the adorers of blocks of stone, and logs of wood. The conduct of the worshippers, also, greatly varied; from the self-denying sacrifices, and real piety, and virtue belonging to these Hindoos, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans; down to the unmentionable moral atrocities, and to the acts of punishment inflicted upon their refractory deities by the discontented Icelander, or crabbed Negro; when he exposes his rude idol to the inclemencies of the weather, &c.; until it sees fit to relent, and intercede, once more, in favour of his interests. And yet, in all, not excepting even these last-named degradations of religious belief, we cannot fail to observe that a Supreme Ruler of all things is looked up to, even through the rude medium of the half-despised idol; and that some shadow of the doctrine of mediation is recognised; man, in his frailty, naturally feeling the desire of seeking for some interposing influence between his own imperfect powers, and the apparently unapproach-

able Occupant of that dread seat which is seen by him only as

“A throne of darkness in the abyss of light,”

while labouring under the terrors of these dismal delusions, which place the Almighty at a distance from him ; instead of within and around the very self, as well as at such infinite distance.

VII. Indeed, of what are all these symbolical idols illustrative? of what but the general recognition of a Being, and an authority, infinitely superior to man himself, the ideas regarding whose wisdom, goodness, power, and truth, as well as frightfulness and vengeful burning indignation, are all derived, more or less, from a cosmological contemplation of nature, inclusive of the human mind itself; and the emblems, or metaphorical expressions, of whose attributes, are all borrowed from the cosmological magazine of creation, including, likewise, the human mind and form ; whether such emblem be the rays of the sun, or the phases of the moon, or the all-embracing circle of the horizon—the lithe and subtle serpent—the imperial head and unflagging wings of the eagle—the majestic front of the lion or the bull—the valued flowers and fruits of different zones, climates, altitudes, and seasons—the human limbs and “human face divine,” as belonging to the most heroic models of mankind in form and faculty, exaggerated in their proportions, purified of their grossness, and moulded into lines and looks of almost ineffable perfection. What are all these, I ask, but typical indications of a constant effort

to reach, through nature, to some approximative representation of the notions entertained of her God, and to illustrate, by means of material devices, not as being simply material, but rather as being a sort of universal language interpretable by all, the ideas of His otherwise inexpressible wisdom, beneficence, power, and grandeur?

VIII. At first, then, briefly to recapitulate, there appears to have been a grand, simple, and pure; though necessarily indistinct, apprehension of the Supreme God, in the earliest flash of natural inspiration, or activity of the unrestrained super-sensuous reason, which characterises the primitive and unsophisticated mind. This was the one general deduction of unaided genius, drawn, outwardly, from the scenes that lay before it, and grounded, inwardly, on an instinctive confidence in the self-consciousness and its faculties, and on the equally intuitive metaphysical axiom, or self-evident truth, that nothing is, or can be, without an adequate cause; except the One Only Real Cause itself, which is, necessarily, eternal. Next, a certain degeneration is found to take place in the course of time, with a gradual tendency to swerve from the awful grandeur of an infinite spiritual unity readily enough apprehended; but impossible of being comprehended within space or time, and to pry, specially or analytically, into the particular attributes of the Alone God, with a view of invoking their special assistance under particular circumstances. In short, an effort is made, during those middle periods—the mind being as yet embarrassed by the multiplicity of its objects—to reduce into certain definite proportions, and

to materialize the notions concerning the Almighty in regard to his attributes, or, as they thought, His more immediate ministers, or agents. At first, the results of such efforts are poor, feeble, and rude, in accordance with the artistic incapacity, and inexperience of the age; but, gradually, they assume nobler, and yet more noble features, as the nations advance in the knowledge of mechanics, in refinement of taste, and other accompaniments of ordinary material civilization; until, in the fulness of true enlightenment, they return, once more, by a synthetical process of mind, or higher generalization of spiritual and material nature as a whole, to the original grandeur and simplicity of the earlier epoch, enriched, and strengthened, and exalted, by the additional proofs and convictions of accumulated knowledge, combined with a more matured reach of thought, and a graver zeal for the acquisition of the real truth.

IX. Positive proof and illustration of these statements are to be found, not only in the histories of the heathen nations above alluded to, whether civilized, or barbaric, or practical, or speculative, into which, however, it is unnecessary now to enter at length, considering their destitution of moral authority with the general modern mind; but also, in the history of the Hebrews themselves, and their followers, as I shall now proceed to show from the Sacred Book itself, as accepted by the theologians of Jewish, and Mahomedan, as well as Christian nations.

X. It is, then, to be observed, that the Scripture, or Lesson, as it is called, of that ancient race, as the great

instrument of moral and religious teaching, so far from moving out of its special path, or halting in its direct object, in order to correct this, or that, popular misconception in physics, or natural philosophy, or stopping to elevate the whole intellectual man, prior to teaching him his plain daily duty to God, and his neighbour, simply conforms to the common language, prejudices, traditions, and even gross errors, of the peoples and times ; just as we ourselves continue to do, while speaking of the “*rising*” and “*setting*” sun ; of “*up*” and “*down*” ; of the feelings of the “*heart*” and of the “*bowels*” ; of compassion ; irrespective of the astronomical and physiological facts now rendered so familiar by Harvey, and Newton, and sundry others.

XI. Let it be said, then, once more, that the proposition already laid down relative to the natural rise and progress of the human idea of a Divinity, drawn from outward and inward sources, and the subsequent perversion and degradation, yet ultimate purification and exaltation of such idea, is very markedly confirmed by the analogy which it bears to the different representations of the manifestations of the Divine Being, as given in these Scriptures at different times and places ; and, according to its habit, conforming, within the bounds of moral and spiritual truth, to the capacity, or intellectual calibre, and even prejudices, of the bulk of the peoples to whom they were addressed. The essential truths to be conveyed are spiritual and of God ; but the mode of their conveyance is more or less sensuous, as most suited to the general nature of men in the mass ; just as fables

and parables are used to convey abstract moral doctrines; otherwise, comparatively so impalpable to the common, or juvenile, mind.

XII. Thus, in the early chapters of Genesis, we have the simple and indefinite, but grand and solemn expressions, such as have been translated into "*God*" (or Power) — "*The Lord* (or self-existent) *God*," and the "*Spirit* (or Divine Influence or Will) *of God*." The fact of such names being indefinite, only the more confirms their truth; for, how could the Infinite be defined either by, or for, the finite, or even at all? Or, beyond such abstract expressions of the internal qualities of the soul, such as *mind, thought, will, power*, and the like, how could the invisible and impalpable be indicated to the masses of ordinary men,—necessarily so much occupied in material affairs,—by any figures or words, excepting under the form of metaphor? Farther on, we have the expressions of "*Almighty God*," or God of All-sufficient Power, "*Everlasting God*," and "*God of Heaven*," and "*God of the Earth*," as indicative of a Supreme Divine Government over all. In the very first account of Creation, we find nothing besides these simple but grand names of "*God*," and "*Lord God*," and "*Spirit of God*." The innate sublimity of the recorded acts themselves, certainly tends, to exalt the language employed; but no language is needed to exalt the acts. The words are, evidently, chosen according to the capacity of the primitive peoples; rather than in correspondence with the ineffable grandeur of the occasion. The majesty of the style, obviously, does not lie, as has often been said, in any mere

simplicity; for the apparent simplicity is found to be rich in its comprehensive suggestiveness, and in its extreme condensation, united with extreme elasticity, of meaning. Thus, when the "*Spirit of God*—as a strong wind, or All-powerful Out-breathing—is said to move upon the face of the waters, or abyss, and to utter the command, "*Let there be Light*," and, immediately, "*There was Light*," we have a brief, but full illustration, of the Omnipotent will, or word, followed by the obedience of the elements. Yet, it is felt to be impossible to keep the ordinary mind under such a continuous strain of attempting to realize the magnitude of such superhuman performance; and, therefore, it is relieved of the effort, by the division of the act of Creation, with corresponding intervals, or pauses, and the indication of an ultimate "*rest*," even with Him who "*neither slumbers nor sleeps*," and whose "*rest*," in the common sense of the term, would be equivalent to an annihilation of the universe. The Eternal Creativeness that broods for ever and ever, by night and by day—the Eternal rest of ease and peace, inseparable from a Being so powerful as to know of no effectual obstacle to His will—and the still voice, or word, or silent spiritual influence, that is not heard by the ear, but penetrates to the inner heart, and understanding, were mysteries too subtle for the simple shepherds and husbandmen of the ancient world; even as they now are to us, also; though we may be more able to express, in language, our perception of the truth, and our sense of its mystery at the same time.

XIII. In all the subsequent communications which are represented as having occurred between God, and the primitive progenitors of our kind, including Adam, and Eve, and Cain, and Noah, the modes of expression are simple and familiar in the extreme ; yet, while the conversations and injunctions are brought down to the level of the most ordinary capacity, a celestial purity of conception is maintained, as regards the Divine Being ; by representing Him only as though a voice, a breathing wind, or Holy Word, or Ideal Influence ; such as has been accepted as fit human indications of His Spiritual Essence, and its mode of special communication with man, by the highest and purest minds of all times, down to the present.

XIV. In the age of the Hebrew patriarchs, again, we have representations of more special appearances of Him in visions, and otherwise ; which compel a more decided expression of material presence ; insomuch that, even while calling Him “ *Almighty and Everlasting God* ;” the language yet reduces the idea to the concrete, and, by a bold use of parable, gives Him the very semblance of a man, in figure, and speech, and movement, by familiarly describing Him, as “ *appearing unto,*” and “ *speaking*” with Abraham. Sometimes we find this voice of God, or inspiring word, indicated under the name of “ *The Angel of the Lord,*” and at other times, it is more directly said, “ *The word of the Lord came unto Abraham in a vision ;*” yet, in another place, we find these plainer and more plainly sensuous terms, namely, “ *The Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, ‘ I am Almighty God, walk*

before me, and be thou perfect.’” Also, “Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him,” and finally, “He left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.” Further, it is said, of Isaac, “The Lord appeared unto him, and said ‘I am the God of Abraham thy Father.’” Jacob, also, in one place is represented as “beholding” the Lord; though only through the medium of a vision, or dream. Thus, “He dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the Earth, and the top of it reached to Heaven, and, behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it; and, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, ‘I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, the God of Isaac.’” It also said further on, “God came to Laban, the Syrian, in a dream by night, and spake unto him.” And, again, to Jacob, in a still more material manner, whether as to actual appearance, or as to specific time and place. Thus, “God appeared unto Jacob again when he came from Padan-Aram, and blessed him,” and “God said unto him, ‘I am Almighty God,’” &c., and then the account proceeds, “God went up from him in the place where He talked with him.”

XV. In all the history of Joseph there is no mention of any “appearance” of God, or even of the breathing of the word. It is only said, many times over, “God was with Joseph,” and enlightened him in dreams, and in all other affairs. Joseph, however, is, certainly, made to hear of such an “appearance” on a most solemn occasion; for, on the very deathbed of the father, “Jacob said unto Joseph ‘God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz, in the land of Canaan, and blessed me.’”

XVI. Rising from this extreme simplicity, and homely familiarity, as it were, of expression, after the sons of Israel had become disciplined in the "*learning of the Egyptians*," we have the language becoming again more elevated. In the book of Exodus we have the Angel of the Lord typified under the emblem of a subtle, and all-potent; yet non-destructive, flame of fire, or spiritual radiancy, in Horeb, and the voice of God, or divine word, declaring itself from within it as "I AM THAT I AM;" (or I who am) adding immediately afterwards, "*Thou shalt say that I AM* (or He who Is) *bath sent me unto you*,"—so conveying the limitless idea that He, The JAH, or EHJEH, the One Forever-Being, is neither past nor future—has not ever *been*—and is not ever *to be*: but fills Eternity with a perpetual Being, Doing, and Sustaining, that has neither beginning nor ending; but Is, from everlasting unto everlasting, the I that AM.

XVII. Accepting this interpretation of the words; though the Jewish Doctors themselves are said to differ as to the first expression, owing to the peculiar construction of their verb, which possesses no positive present; but only a past and future, in which case, it might signify, I shall be what I have been,—accepting, I say, this interpretation of "I AM," as the vast majority do, from its agreement with other contexts, and especially with the second and simpler expression which so immediately follows the first, being further confirmed in the accurate expression from the Greek, "*Before Abraham was, I AM*;" then, it must be looked upon as the grand crowning doctrine of the Hebrew prophets and expounders; even

as it is the crowning doctrine of all knowledge. For, though, as we have seen, the idolatrous priesthood of other peoples in those ancient times, looked upon the circle of the horizon, the self-clasping mystical serpent ever returning to itself, the dome of the sky, and the boundless ocean, &c., as emblematical of the compass and duration of a Pantheistic or other Supreme Divinity; yet, how infinitely more expanded must the minds of the more enlightened Israelites have been by this *Great Name* of that One Living, and All-conscious Essence, who is thus represented as holding within His own Omnipotent Being the circles of Eternity and Immensity—whose sphere of Omnipotence and Omniscience has its centre, as has been said, everywhere, and its circumference nowhere; and the hem of whose outer vesture, in this creation, they were permitted to lay hold of; though the essential abstract attribute of His Absolute Being could admit of no description beyond this declaration of the “I AM,” or Eternal Spiritual Presence. Yet, the declaration being once made, is at once accepted by the understanding, quite irrespective of all faith in the authority of Scripture, as such, and as a simple assertion of the ever-enduring Consciousness and Spiritual Power, necessarily inherent in the Originator of every other Possessor of Consciousness and Spiritual Power; being, indeed, as self-evident a truth as is contained in the more ordinary expression of “*Nothing can proceed from nothing,*” and “*Nothing can exist without a cause.*” For, even as the human mind cannot so much as imagine an idea of any beginning or end of space, or what we call time, which

is but a measure for motion, or change, whether of progression or regression, within Eternity, so neither can it imagine any beginning or end of the Primal Intelligent cause of all those multifarious devices which we feel and see in operation within and around us. This idea of God, therefore, like our ideas of Eternity and Immensity, is an inborn and ineffaceable necessity—whether it happen to be latent or patent—of the nature of man, as an inheritor of mind, and becoming apparent to him, as soon as he apprehends the circumstances of his own being in time and place; and such idea of Him as the alone Self-originate God of Gods, implies that He embraces the universality of His Dominion. And, even as we, during our limited lives on Earth, can review, as at a glance of thought, extensive prospects, and numerous events and processes in space and time, so as to form of them, as it were, one present and entire whole; though time be continually escaping from us, and we can see only one portion of space in a second; so the Almighty Spirit, by His Omnipresent, Omniscient, and Eternal fixity of a perfect Consciousness, is said to behold past and future as one Entire Present, and is, therefore, here designated by the Angel and the Prophet, with perfect aptitude, as the I AM, or Eternal Spiritual Presence. And our non-comprehension of such an utterly boundless idea is no bar to our acceptance of it; for, even as we not only can apprehend, but cannot do otherwise than admit, as absolute certitudes, the ever-present, yet never-surmounted, facts of an Eternity and Immensity; while ~~certainly~~, we can never succeed in comprehending either

the one or the other ; so we apprehend, and necessarily admit, the Eternality and Infinitude of the Being of God ; though less comprehensible than anything else. Indeed, the opposite proposition would be infinitely less capable, or rather impossible, of apprehension by the mind ; for, naturally connecting the past and the future as we do, if we endeavoured, forcibly and unnaturally, to sever duration as a continuous totality, by viewing the whole of the past as a thing utterly gone, and the whole of the future as something not yet come ; instead of the present as being the direct issue of the past, and the future as being rooted in the present, and therefore, also, in what we call the past, we should be left with nothing in our possession but the current moment fleeting away as soon as born, and with no link to bind it or us to anything else before or after ; so bringing us to such a climax of absurdity, to such an endless alternation of annihilations and renewed creations, that the reason revolts from it ; though, while thus revolting, it finds a ready and rational support in the idea of this Eternal Present, or Eternity, and the Being who fills it ; involving as He does, like His own law of gravitation co-ordinating the multitudinous backward and forward dashings and rippings of ocean, all the ever-varying phenomena of causes and effects, past or future, or near or distant, in one bond of eternal interdependence upon each other ; and fixing all the infinite, yet orderly, mutations of nature, by the perfect, because flexible, immutability of His mutually modifiable laws. Indeed, this idea of an Eternal Present only requires one first act of mind,

followed by a gradual enlargement of view, for its apprehension; for, once out of what we call, humanly, the actually present moment, and yet in it, at the same time, so to speak, where is, or can be, the stop? We now, at this instant, stand, as it were, upon less than the point of a needle in regard to our time; and yet we wheel around it, so as to embrace all the interwoven circumstances of what we call the present hour, the present day, the present century, or present age, nay, the present scheme of things, and, more than all, the present Eternity, in which we thus know that we subsist; and not only subsist, but with minds so constituted as to be able, under sundry conceivable conditions, to expand their operations more and more from their own centres towards an unreachable, because non-existent, circumference; as limited, yet relatively infinite spirits, moving hither and thither within the Absolute Infinitude. In short, when once imbibed, or rather aroused into conscious life, such ideas as those of Eternity and Infinitude, and the God of Eternity and Infinitude, become fixed as integral elements of the mental constitution, which sophistry and scepticism, such as have been already alluded to, may affect to repudiate, but can never eradicate; simply because their eradication, even if possible, would imply such a loss of the natural mental endowments, or such a stunting of the powers of thought, as would be equivalent to a state of idiotism, or brutality. For, as the human consciousness and designing intellect recognise, in themselves, and in surrounding objects, the impress of a consciousness, and designing intellect,

infinitely transcending themselves; just as much as they recognise themselves, and the surrounding objects; so any *real* non-recognition of the one, or the other, as distinguished from the affectations of a pedantic sophistry, or morbid contradictoriness for argument's sake, would, certainly, indicate such an absence of perception and reason, as belongs only to such idiots, or to the brute creation. And this, though it may sound, is not said, as a taunt; but simply as a matter of fact, which every rational mind must feel to be true.

XVIII. Again, to confirm further this view of the varying mode of the Hebrew teaching in time and place, we have the first announcement of the "I AM," or Eternal Spiritual Presence, followed up by another special declaration of the Supreme Name of "JEHOVAH," for which the Jews used ADONAI or LORD—the One Sole Self-subsisting Essence, and from whose Self-subsistence, being granted, we necessarily deduce His attributes of Omniscience, Omnipotence, Ubiquity, and Eternality; and yet, in poetry, to suit the popular occasion, we have this subtle and intolerable blaze of the Ever-upheaving and Inexhaustible Fountain-head of all spiritual light and life, boldly reduced to the concrete again; which, in fact, is the chief characteristic of all poetry, or picturesque representation of ideas, and wisely employed to bring the awfully sublime moral mystery of the Godhead, and other kindred spiritual matters, down to the level of the more sensuous orders of understanding. So, in the Song of Moses, after the passage of the Red Sea, this very same JEHOVAH, and Incomprehensible

"I AM," or Eternal Spiritual Presence, is spoken of as "*A man of war*," whose "*right hand dasheth in pieces the enemy*," and the "*blast of whose nostrils congealed the depth in the heart of the sea*." We also see His Transcendant Power typified under the material terrors of Sinai in a storm of fire, cloud, darkness, earthquake, and thunder, commingled with the long and loud blasts of the Seraphic Trumpet; while "*the glory of the Lord*" shone from within the cloud, and the sight of "the glory" was like devouring fire from within the midst of that cloud on the top of the mount. But, it is said, there were "*darkness, cloud*," and "*thick darkness*"; so that this Divine Fire shone only as an unbearable brilliancy, tempered by the merciful interposition of a veil of night; and, care is further taken, by this instructor in Heavenly things, to guard the common mind from false ideas of this "*glory*" and Special Presence of God, when he says, "*The mountain (HOREB) burned with fire unto the midst of Heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness; and the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire. Ye heard the voice of the words; but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice.*"

XIX. A further strong illustration of this mixed kind of instruction is recorded afterwards; wherein the Spiritual Effulgence, or "*glory*," of the Supreme Deity, is typified under the word "*face*;" while the "*stiff-necked people*" are treated with a language still more in accordance with their crass condition of mind; as, when Moses states that the Lord "*spake face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend*;" yet, clearly, showing that this was a mere

figure of speech, implying intimate mental communication, by adding immediately afterwards, in respect to the "glory," "*Thou canst not see my face ; for there shall no man see me and live ;*" and in similarly figurative language, he adds, "*While my glory passeth by, I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover thee with my hand as I pass by, and thou shalt see my back parts ; but my face shall not be seen.*" And so is it now, as in those, and all other times, the Real Glory, or Spiritual Effulgence is, in its integrity and highest essence, altogether unutterable ; and only to be partially read by finite minds, in the light and shadow of created things. The outer vesture of Deity, like our own bodies, and the visible works which we produce, may be contemplated by mind through the eye and other senses ; but the living Essence of Essences, like our own partial inspiration therewith, can be grasped by the soul alone, and only grasped, without being comprehended, or even intimately known, except in a limited degree ; through our self-consciousness, with its faculties, and their functions for spiritual affairs, by dint of the sense of mental affinity, analogical reasoning, and those fundamental certitudes of thought, already spoken of.

XX. How highly, again, are we raised by the expressions of the Book of Job, which, by whomsoever written, or at whatsoever exact date ; so vividly exhibits a very primitive, and, at the same time, a very intellectual and spiritual state of society ! The latter fact is proved by its pure doctrine as to the nature of God, and its lofty sentiments regarding truth, justice, mercy, friendship, and tender generous love ; while the simplicity of the social

appliances, in a pastoral age and country, indicates an unadvanced stage of material civilization, as compared with this higher mental refinement, and finer aptitude for the deep things of God. Here the divinity is described as "*past finding out,*" while yet some figurative glimpses are afforded of Him, through the medium of the phenomena of the exterior world; as, indeed, the whole of the concluding argument, when the "*voice of the Lord*" is represented as addressing Job out of the whirlwind, consists in allusions to the various works of creation; their vastness, their power, their beauty, the economy and harmony with which they work, and their origin from, and dependence upon, Him of whom Job says, after pondering over the wondrous series of illustrations thus brought before him in a mass, "*I know that Thou canst do everything: I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee.*" That is to say, the mind's eye, or the spiritually apprehensive power of the super-sensuous reason; since it has just been shown from these scriptures that "No man can see God and live," though what may be considered the case with an immortal body, Job leaves us in no doubt of his views; while speaking of his hopes founded on a continuous self-identity of being; as rendered in the Doway translation, saying; "*I know that my Redeemer liveth, and, in the last day, I shall rise out of the earth: And I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh, I shall see God. Whom I shall see, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. This, my hope, is laid up in my bosom;*" or, according to another, "*After I shall awake, though this body be*

destroyed ; yet out of my flesh shall I see God." While God is represented by Job in all conceivable majesty and grandeur, so far as the most powerful and graphic human language can attain, and after He is described, as "*stretching out the north, and hanging the Earth on nothing,*" as "*shaking the pillars of Heaven,*" and "*dividing the seas,*" as "*garnishing the Heavens*" and "*forming the winding serpent :*" yet still the divine poet feels it necessary to add, "*Lo ! these are but parts of His ways. But how little a portion is heard of Him ! The thunder of His power, who can understand ?*"

XXI. David, and others, in the Book of Psalms, give us particularly beautiful, and sublime images, all drawn from external nature, as operating on the human mind ; and, at the same time, pure and spiritual views of the Godhead. Thus "*The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech, or language where their voice is not heard.*" And again "*O Lord, how manifold are thy works ; in wisdom hast thou made them all. The Earth is full of thy riches. So is this great and wide sea ; wherein are things creeping innumerable ; both small and great beasts. These wait upon Thee that Thou mayest give them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand ; they are filled with good. Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled. Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth Thy spirit, they are created, and Thou renewest the face of the Earth. The glory of the Lord shall endure forever.*"

The Lord shall rejoice in His works." And especially in Psalm 148th where, by a daring hyperbole, the singer calls upon sun, moon, and stars; mountains, rivers, and seas; hail, fire, and all living things to speak for themselves, and testify in praise of Him, who "*commanded and they were created,*" who also "*stablished them forever and forever,*" by a "*decree that shall not pass,*" and whose "*glory is above the Earth and Heavens.*" Nor does David omit to indicate the power of spirit as above matters of sense, when, in Psalm 94th, he asks "*He who planted the ear, shall He not hear?*" and "*He who formed the eye shall He not see?*" clearly indicating the absolutely necessary truth, that understanding must precede and support all superstructure of material forms that have within them any evidence of plan or purpose; although the mode of expression be such as to have emboldened certain pedants to say that it is not reasoning; simply because it is not enounced after the style of Aristotle.

XXII. Solomon, born to an easy reign, and not only having had less of the romantic vicissitudes of his father; but being, naturally, of a more practical, and less poetic temperament, takes less glorious flights, and shows more of an Earthly careful prudence, than of that more purely Heavenly wisdom which eschews such self-reliance in worldly affairs or any others, and which makes the songs of David a perpetual and unfailing source of comfort to all suffering hearts, and to be felt by them as wings to the devout understanding. He, however, still looks to Creation as the prime outward source of our ideas of God, as when he says "*The Lord, by*

wisdom, hath founded the Earth; by understanding hath He established the Heavens. By His knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew." And again, "He hath made everything beautiful in His time." "I know that whatsoever God doeth it shall be forever. Nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." Also, "Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun; because, though a man labour to find to seek it out: yet he shall not find it. Yea, further, though a wise man think to know it; yet shall he not be able to find it." Because, so much is visible to the eye of the body, the meaning of which is yet invisible to the understanding; just as certain things are clearly grasped by the understanding, which are invisible to the bodily eye.

XXIII. In Isaiah, we have ideas similar to those of the Psalms, and the Book of Job, regarding "*the High and lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity*," and conveyed in like natural, or Cosmological figures, as in the 40th chapter, where, while asking "*To whom, then, will ye liken God, or what likeness will ye compare unto Him?*" He yet is spoken of as "*measuring out the waters in the hollow of His hand*," and "*meting the Heavens with a span*," as "*comprehending the dust of the Earth in a measure*," and "*weighing the mountains in scales*," and "*the hills in a balance*," as "*sitting upon the circle of the Earth*," whose "*inhabitants are as grass-hoppers before Him*," and "*stretching the Heavens as a curtain*," and then the prophet exclaims, "*Lift up your eyes on*

high, and behold who hath created these things, and bringeth out their host by number !” “ Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the Everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the Earth, fainteth not, neither is weary ?” “ There is no searching of His understanding.” And again, to give assurance that it is He, and No Other that is meant, it is declared, *“ I am the First, and I am the Last, and, besides me, there is no God.”*

XXIV. Jeremiah, while exhibiting comparatively few special illustrations from external nature, still holds strongly to the standing miracle of creation as a totality ; while he also maintains the same pure, spiritual, and exalted idea of God as the Supreme Being. *“ The gods (or POWERS)”* he says, *“ that have not made the Heavens and the Earth ; even they shall perish from the Earth, and from under these Heavens. God (or the SUPREME POWER of POWERS) hath made the Earth by His might ; He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the Heavens by His discretion. When He uttereth His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the Heavens ; and He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the Earth ; He maketh lightning with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of His treasures.”* This Prophet further indicates the Divine Prescience in the same manner as David, while alluding to the eye and the ear, as already quoted, when he makes God say of himself, *“ Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee,”* obviously implying the same Universal and Eternal truth in regard to all things else in the womb of time,

inclusive of mind and its thoughts under all conceivable or possible forms, his meaning being proved by the surpassing grandeur and significance of the titles which he subsequently gives Him, as "The God of Life, the God of Truth, and the King of Eternity."

XXV. A remarkable passage occurs in the history of Elijah, when that Prophet is represented as having a special sense of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the wilderness of Horeb, and where, as in the above instance, the more subtle glimpses of the Incomprehensible *Jehovah*, are intermixed with those outward and visible signs of majesty which are more tangible to the common understanding of mankind, to which these oracles were addressed, as well as to the deep and wise. Thus it is said, "*The LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake; and, after the earthquake, a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire, a Still Small Voice.*" — "*A Still Small Voice,*" a quiet, and almost noiseless, and, even, so to speak, silent word; but more penetrating, and more overwhelming in its power, than all the winds, and all the earthquakes, and all the fires, that had raged since the world began. A still, or silent voice, typical of that same secret and unheard Creative Force, speaking to our hearts and understandings every hour of our lives, when the hidden energies of nature work out their perpetual work within the innermost recesses of her Being; in the germ of the buried seed, in the quickened egg, in the

teeming myriads of spawn at the bottom of the deep, in the "mystic dance" of the heavenly bodies, and, to bring it quite home to the internal experience of all, in the active soul of man himself, when thoughts will crowd upon thoughts, like the rush of an impetuous tide; but with nothing of its roar.

XXVI. In the Book of Ezekiel, the words of which were uttered in a more materialistic age, to hearers whose minds had become familiarized with the idolatrous rites of the Assyrians, and contaminated by the spectacle of that people, in their attempts to reduce their ideas of divine beings to certain visible forms of coarse and uncouth aspect, we find the Prophet labouring, as it were, to elevate the souls of those captive and debased Hebrews to the more ancient standard of spiritual truth; but yet, seemingly, compelled to employ very figurative passages of an artificial, as well as natural kind. He commences by saying, "*I was amongst the captives by the river of Chebar, and the Heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God.*" "*And I looked, and behold, a whirlwind came out of the north; a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire.*" He then goes on to speak of "*the living creatures, with the appearances of burning coals and lamps,*" each creature having four faces and four wings," and also of "*the wheels with their rings full of eyes,*" and the "*sapphire throne,*" and the fire-environed likeness of a man. These he mentions again and again, as if alluding to the firmament of stars as the throne of the Almighty; but yet he

guards himself against misconception by using expressions quadruply, as it were, refined in their meaning, as when he says, "*Above the firmament that was over their heads, was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone, and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness of the appearance of a man above it. And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it; from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about it:*" being evidently meant to indicate another, and a higher brightness than its own; else how could it be perceived as a brightness? But, above all, he concludes this vision with such an involved sentence as "*This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord,*" so as to convey, with unmistakable force—Do not think that what I picture here is God; nor yet His glory, nor even the likeness of His glory; but only the appearance or dim reflection thereof so far as can be conveyed by me, or understood by your grosser earthly faculties.

XXVII. Daniel, who lived under circumstances altogether similar to those of Ezekiel, uses a like sort of language; though not of so highly figurative a character, while addressing the same captive, and degenerate Hebrews. His general style is much plainer than that of Ezekiel; but yet he exhibits this same peculiar characteristic of the age, in labouring after some visible and artificial embodiment of the Divine Presence. Thus he says, "*The Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head as the pure*

wool ; His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued, and came forth from before Him ; thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him." But he, too, guards against misconception by the titles which he elsewhere employs, such as "*God of Heaven.*" "*Almighty God.*" "*God of Gods.*" "*God, whose dwelling is not with flesh.*" Scarcely, if any, allusion is made by either of these two Prophets of Exile to this "*God of God's*" wondrous creation. However mildly they might have been otherwise treated ; the crushed and fettered souls of the captivity were, most likely, too grossly defiled to appreciate the true inner mystery of that Divine Vesture, or visible evolution of Power, Wisdom, Love, Beauty, and grandeur, which we call nature. It was a period of grotesquely imaginative art, of a kind of art, which did not reflect nature as herself ; but caricatured and distorted her, under sundry monstrosities of barbaric fancy. It was an epoch of winged bulls, winged lions, and forty-foot idols of gold, in the midst of which these captives lived. It was an age, when so-called truth, and obedience to its authority, were enforced by the teeth of lions, and burning fiery furnaces seven-fold heated ; and though these Prophets undoubtedly saw more deeply, and clearly than all this, and so expressed themselves in sundry other parts of their writings ; yet they made the general tenor of their language conformable to the minds of their sensuous and degraded living audiences. The multitude of such clauses, in their discourses, spoke to the period and the

peoples then, for the time, being; but their more recondite and comprehensive utterances speak for all time and for Eternity.

XXVIII. Habakkuk, like the greater prophets, and in an epoch when strong efforts were made for the revival of purer thinking, exhibits material, but natural, imagery to magnify his Maker's praise, and, at the same time, retains the spiritual conception of the real Essence. He addresses the Deity, saying, "*Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord, my God, mine Holy One?*" And again, "*His glory covered the Heavens, and the Earth was full of His praise, and His brightness was as the light.*" "*He stood and measured the Earth: He beheld and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting hills were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: His ways are everlasting.*" "*The mountains,*" he exclaims, "*saw Thee and they trembled; the over-flowing of the waters passed by: the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high.*" But, while thus represented amid the terrors of so dread a tumult, the prophet firmly holds by the "*still voice,*" whose whisper is heard above the jarring noise of those crashing rocks, and boiling waves; and he therefore, exhibits, even in the height of this seeming confusion, that abiding faith, or confidence in the ordainer of the future, which seeks to root itself in Eternity and God; and which no passing adversity of fire, earthquake, tempest, famine, or human persecution, however protracted, can crush out of the heart; and, therefore, he adds, in the height of human moral, and spiritual grandeur, seated sublime upon the rock of ages,

“Although the fig-tree shall not blossom ; neither shall fruit be in the vine ; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat ; the flock shall be cut off from the fold ; and there shall be no herd in the stalls ; yet will I rejoice in the Lord. I will joy in the God of my salvation.”

XXIX. Finally, in the time of Christ, when these Eastern nations shared in all the refined moral and intellectual, as well as material, civilization of the Roman Empire, whose greatest men secretly, if not openly, abjured the polytheism of the vulgar, and inclined to the recognition of one only God, there is a return to the primitive, pure, and simple expression—God, which is so highly conformable to our most exalted, though indefinite idea of His benificent omnipotence, and omniscience. Therefore, in the New Testament, while the awful sense of His unspeakable power is indicated by the terms “*Lord of Heaven and Earth.*” “*Alpha and Omega.*” “*First and Last.*” “*Almighty,*” &c. ; the tender mercy which characterises the dispensation of Jesus, as a message of love and free grace, is couched under the expressions, “*Abba.*” “*God our Father,*” and “*God of perfect love,*” who hath not only, by His will, created this vasty universe of worlds ; and cared for us and numbered the hairs of our heads ; but also suffers not even a sparrow to fall to the ground unheeded of Him. These later addresses and scriptures, being founded upon those that had preceded them, and their authors having adopted all the ancient doctrines of the Being of God, and His laws, apart from the mere ceremonials, it certainly did not lie within their special scope to enforce further a

belief in those divine attributes ; but they took them for granted, and rather devoted their energies to the fuller exposition of the practical yet especially spiritual moral law, founded on the spiritual connection subsisting between man and his Maker, and demanding a critical self-inspection as to motives quite transcending the mere letter of the old law, while inculcating the utmost charity towards the failings of others. The ancient prophets, Amos and Hosea, nearly eight hundred years before, had already foreshadowed this higher purity of doctrine ; Amos saying, "*I hate and despise your feast-days : and I will not smell in your holy assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt-offerings, I will not accept them ; neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs : for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But rather let judgment roll down as the waters ; and righteousness as a mighty stream.*" And, again, Hosea, when he declares, in the name of his God, "*I desired mercy, and not sacrifice ; and the knowledge of God, rather than burnt-offerings.*" But Isaiah, also, about the same date, had still more eloquently foreshadowed this purity of moral doctrine, as contrasted with dry evasible laws and external priestly ceremonies ; when he exclaimed, "*To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me,*" saith the Lord, "*I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams ; and the fat of fed beasts : and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When you come before me, who hath required this at your hands to tread my courts ? Bring no more vain oblations ; incense is an abomination unto me ; the new-*

moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with : it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new-moons, and your appointed feasts my soul hateth : they are a trouble unto me. I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you. Yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood. Wash you ; make you clean ; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes. Cease to do evil : learn to do well. Seek judgment ; relieve the oppressed ; judge the fatherless ; plead for the widow." And then he adds, "*Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."* And so, also, does the passage, just quoted from Habakkuk, accord, in its perfect resignation to the Divine Will, with the brief but comprehensive self-denying sentiment of the newer dispensation, "*Thy will, not mine, be done."*

XXX. Chiefly engaged in inculcating such lessons as the above, there was less need of illustrations of a cosmological kind ; because, though their hearers practically neglected the moral duties, they fully acknowledged the existence, and the powers and laws of the Deity, as represented by the ancient prophets. Nevertheless, in sundry places, nature also is alluded to as indicating the glory of the God of the Gospel, as well as of the God of Israel ; as when Jesus declares, even of the humble lilies of the field — while enforcing the precept of dependence and reliance on God and not on self — "*Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these."*

XXXI Paul, also, while speaking at Athens of the Greek altar with the inscription "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD," says, "*Whom ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you. God that made the world, and all things therein; seeing that He is Lord of Heaven and Earth; dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands; as though He needed anything; seeing that He giveth to all, life, and breath, and all things.*" And again, addressing the Hebrews, "*Every house is builded of some man; but He that built all things is God.*"

XXXII. John, in the Apocalypse, addressed to the Asiatic churches, waxing fervid in poetic sentiment, exclaims, after the manner of Ezekiel and Daniel, "*Behold, a door was opened in Heaven, and the first voice which I heard was, as it were, of a trumpet, talking with me, which said, 'Come up hither, and I shall show thee things which must be hereafter.'*" And immediately I was in the spirit, and behold, a throne was set in Heaven, and ONE sat on the throne, and he that sat was, to look upon, like a jasper and sardine stone; and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald." Here we are reminded, not only of the visions of Ezekiel and Daniel; but also of the passage in Exodus wherein Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel are described as ascending Sinai, when "*They saw the God of Israel, and there was, under His feet, as it were, a paved work of sapphire stone, and, as it were, the body of Heaven in His clearness.*" There is, obviously, a reservation of deep spiritual meaning in the doubly repeated expression "*as it were,*" and again, "*as it*"

were," or "as," which warns us against the dry literal acceptance of such attempted embodiments of the God-head. But the great High-Priest, as we accept Him, of all these Prophets and Apostles, Himself disperses any remaining mist that might still hover over the subject, and more highly raises, even while He subdues, the mind; when, having corrected the interpretation of all intermediate passages, by the declaration, through his Apostles as well as Moses, that "*no man hath seen God at any time,*" "*nor can see Him*"—inasmuch as He is "*the King Eternal, Immortal, and Invisible.*" "*The blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see.*" He, I say, revives the most ancient word, or doctrine, and declares personally, with an abstract purity, and simplicity of conception, that accords with the humblest, even as it fills the highest capacity beyond measure. "*God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth.*" Such positive and decided declarations at once indicate the proper interpretation to be put upon any metaphorical methods of expression used by other persons in other parts of these books.

XXXIII. So much for the manner in which these sacred writers, and teachers, drew their illustrations of the God-head from natural, or cosmological sources; in order to bring the purely abstract or spiritual revelations of His otherwise utterly Incomprehensible Being down to the level of men's capacities in different times and places; and so much for the simple, homely, and familiar representa-


tions of Him, as afforded to the peoples of unlettered, or corrupt ages, as compared with the earlier or later, but purer pictures of His dazzling glory—dazzling, even though it be not His actual glory; but only the shadow of the appearance of the likeness thereof, and that seen “*as through a glass darkly*,” that is, under those material obstructions to which the finite mind is at present exposed, and only as reflected upon it, and upon nature as a whole; the impress of the glory existing in both, but the consciousness of it being manifested only within the region of Real Mind, or Reason.

D. N.

PART THIRD.

ON THE SPECIAL CONNECTION OF THE IDEA CONCERNING GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES WITH NATURE AS A UNITY.

I. Now, besides the grandeur of the Heavens, the terrestrial field from which these ancient writers, whether sacred or profane, derived their powers of thus adventuring to represent by imagery their ideas of "*the appearance of the likeness of the glory*," of the Divine Being, was comparatively limited, amounting, as it did, only to a certain range of coast country in Asia Minor; next, the lands to the East as far as India, and, to the West, portions of Europe and Africa, principally those abutting on the Mediterranean Sea, and part of the Atlantic Ocean; with their various lakes and islands. This tract, certainly, contained many magnificent objects; such as the rivers Indus, Nile, Euphrates, Danube, and Rhine, &c.; the Red, Black, and Mediterranean Seas; and part of the Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans; the stupendous mountains of Libanus, Caucasus, Alps, Appenines, and Pyrenees; the terrific volcanoes of Etna, and Vesuvius; and all the wonderful, and almost opposite, varieties of




plants, and animals that occupied those regions, and possessed frames and constitutions exactly suited, as by foregone design, to the various climates and surfaces which they were destined to inhabit. Such, to illustrate the principle briefly, were the sure-footed antelopes, and goats, and wild-asses of the rugged precipitous mountains; the flat-footed, and water-carrying camels and dromedaries of the yielding sandy deserts; the pouchy-beaked pelican, which lived in dry inland parts, and yet had to fish for itself and young at sea; the four-fold stomached herb-fed sheep and ox; and the single-stomached and flesh-fed lion, &c.; these, with the web-footed swimmers; the long-legged and long-billed waders; the oily-feathered and sharply shaped divers; the far-sighted, sharp-beaked, and strong-taloned pouncers; and innumerable others—crocodiles, serpents, insects, &c., &c., all indicating, not merely such variations, and occasional seeming adaptations of structure and instinct; as might, possibly, at a hasty thoughtless glance, be referred to a so-called chance, or accidental adaptation; but a relatively infinite variety of formation and character, each precisely and invariably suited to a relatively infinite variety of circumstances, along with striking peculiarities as to stripes, spots, and mere dots of quite unexpected coloration, clearly testified, to those ancient observers and thinkers, that the Power who designed them was infinitely more infinite in faculties, and afforded to them quite sufficient ground, as we have just seen, for conceptions of His Being, so profound and so lofty, that they can never cease to thrill the hearts of men with a sense of awe and sublimity to

the latest ages ; and, therefore, as regards the existence and attributes of such Being, quite convincing to all natural and unsophisticated minds ; the arguments of such a discourse as this being chiefly directed in confutation of those who have a tendency to yield to the sway of that subtle, though delusive species of Logic, or rather thorough paralogy, such as Paul viewed as “*foolishness and vain philosophy*”—and which is again being revived in this present age, by men who have pushed the sceptic and inductive methods to such a pitch of absurdity under a baseless and barren form of logic, that, even while incongruously arrogating to themselves a special character for *positivity* of doctrine, they can arrive at no satisfactory or permanent deductions at all ; but only at a perceptive knowledge of individual, and, as they think, or perhaps only say, *somehow*, constantly associated facts ; the laws which regulate these facts being viewed, not as ordinations, but only as temporary generalizations formed by themselves as observers for convenience’ sake : if, by some of them, whose scepticism may have crippled their inductive faculty itself, even these, or the facts on which they are founded, be allowed to be what they seem, or to be at all. So, unpositive is this so-called positivity ; which is positive only as regards bare facts, if ever perfectly sure even as to them ; just as it is positive in its negation of a God, while liberally admitting that He *may* be ; though not, by any means, of necessity ; nor capable of being demonstrated by any kind of proof hitherto adduced. That is to say, to *their* mind, which constrains them, as they aver, not only to ignore a God, but also causation,

or any Primary Motive Power in the Universe ; inasmuch as they can recognise in Nature only a certain orderly series of sequences, how produced they know not, or how certain events should always go after or before each other in an invariable manner ; although admitting that they do so, and, therefore, amidst all their doubtings, professing to comport themselves, according to the acknowledged circumstances, with prudence and worldly wisdom. In short, they profess to see order without an Orderer ; regularity without a Regulator ; and design without a Designer ; and, if anything positive is to be educed from this, it is neither more nor less, than a demand of ocular demonstration for all that can possibly be, and a denial of any mental powers except within themselves as men. But so long as we see a principle of reason binding together causes and effects, wherever we can understand them ; so long must we accept that as a mental demonstration of a Rational Originator thereof ; and, by inference, of all things else ; whether understood or not.

II. Certainly, in connection with such a point, and putting on one side for a moment the fundamental certitudes of reason, with regard to causation, we can bring ourselves to suppose, in imagination, that three orders of events could possibly have occurred in nature ; such as might have led the rational mind to conclude that all, except, perhaps, itself, might have proceeded from a fortuitous concurrence of circumstances, under some eternal, and physico-dynamically omnipotent, but unintelligent Force ; namely and firstly—either a persistent

dead sameness, and utter immobility, and immutability of entities, or existences ; or, secondly, an uniform repetition of perfect similarities of material being ; or, else, thirdly, a perpetual production, or transmutation, of never-ending and startling ; but capricious and unmeaning novelties in lifeless organization. But, here and now, on, the other hand, we have such a kind and degree of fixity, or what we call immutability ; such a kind and degree of sameness, or what we call uniformity ; and such a kind and degree of change and variation as to proportions of time, size, motion, form, colour, and sound, &c., characterizing the general economy of the universe, each of them relatively so infinite and absolute, and yet so far short of the really infinite and absolute ; and each of them so flexibly balanced and blended in innumerable proportions, and so flexibly arranged together toward the attainment of the one common end of mutual support, even in their apparent antagonisms, thus indicating the presence of a purposed general order derivable only from mind ; that, taking also into consideration the keen sense of mind that is within ourselves, we feel we must look to an Omnipotent Omniscience alone as the One permanent and persistent Cause of the one harmonious result ; in order to make the spectacle anywise explicable, or even in the least degree intelligible, as a totality, to any rational soul. It might be rebutted, by the sceptical philosophers above alluded to, that the rational soul modifies whatever it sees, and reads all these things, in this manner, by its own light alone ; shaping, and shading, and colouring them according to its own mere will and




pleasure. This, as already shown, is not the fact; as we are compelled to accept so many matters positively against our will and pleasure; though, even if this were not so, the further question would still recur:—Whence this rational soul, and whence its light, that could thus call into existence, or mould to its own will, such a stupendous and blazing theatre of wonders; even if such theatre were not a reality, but a mere scene of self-illusion?—a question, as just said, which has before been disposed of.

III. Other such disputants of the present day, in still plainer terms, have actually averred, even while admitting the existence of such a power as that of design, that it is only to be viewed as a quality of the human mind, not reflected from nature upon that mind; but from that mind upon nature. Yet even of such a supposition could be shown to be a fact, which, however, I am very far from admitting, and that design, therefore, could only be proved to be present in works of human art, and not in those of nature which are of Divine art, so to speak, we must still ask again, whence the human mind, and its powers of design, and whence those matters upon which it so operates? The axiom concerning necessary causation, in its one true sense of pure and active origination, commands but one answer to such an inquiry from any created intellectual being, whose faculties have not become artificially warped, an answer which can be evaded—for it cannot be met—only by one or other of two quite opposite means,

“If *means* it can be called, that *means* is none,”


namely, the absurdity, either of an assertion of their own absolute self-sufficiency, with an utter denial of the existence of all things else ; except as their own creations, including, of course, their very organizations ; or else, on the other hand, a perfect self-abnegation, including an abnegation of this very faculty of thoughtful design, the presence of which, within themselves, they had already admitted ; though only for the purpose of avoiding a difficulty which they, otherwise, felt to be insurmountable for them : but which, on the other hand, is the main support and surest foundation of that doctrine which declares, or affirms, the everlasting Presence of a Supreme Designer of all things, which Supreme Designer must be the Supreme Spirit, or God. But these cavillers, as just said, would actually demand ocular proof of the personality of a God ; finding which, they would of course, triumph in their spirit of materialism ; but missing it, as they must do, they simply ignore all about it, and in such wilful, or at least, asserted ignorance, equally claim a victory ; forgetting the fact already put prominently forward, namely, that the essential distinctions between the so-called forces of matter, and the powers of mind or spirit, is this—that, however imponderable such material forces may be, such as heat, light, electricity, and the like, they each become quite apparent to one or more of the senses, when once evoked from their latent condition ; whereas, the powers of mind are appreciable by mind alone, and operate upon pure abstractions and perfect idealities of thought that have no material representatives whatever. Wherefore, to demand a bodily vision as the



one acceptable demonstration of the Spirit of God, is as great an absurdity as to demand a bodily vision of the spirits of men. I behold my human companion in his material lineaments, and apparel, and he, in like manner, beholds me; but who of us all can grasp at the real thoughts and purposes of each other; except by a voluntary unfolding thereof by overt acts, which, even then, may be deceptive? And yet, who doubts the positive personality of such spirits; excepting only those who are compelled to ignore their very selves in order to logically justify them—if real logic be in the matter at all—in ignoring the spirit of God? To minds of such a materialistic bent, and filled with an artificially induced prejudice against the clearest evidences, not only of a metaphysical, but even of the grossest physical kind, when any mental meaning is sought to be attached to them, no form of illustration is allowed to come home in a natural manner; for, even as in the present order of affairs, they look upon the slow gradual growth of a plant or animal as a mere series of sequences, arising from the self-inherent force of the atoms concerned; and on the sudden outburst of a volcano or earthquake as an accidental disruption of the terrestrial cohesion; so, if, on the contrary, an earthquake, or volcanic eruption were to assume a slow action, and the plant or animal were to spring, as almost from a sort of nothing, into something so complex, and superb as a full-grown oak, elm, lion, or man, &c., they would still according to their principles profess, or affect, to see in the first, only a long series of mechanical sequences, gradually culminating in a quiet crisis; and,

in the second, only a sort of inexplicable explosion of some hitherto compressed "*force*," too rapid for investigation, and too frequently repeated to call for any expression of surprise. But, on the other hand, the natural and unsophisticated reason recognizes the activity of an infinitely higher reason in all those modes of mechanical and chemical order, organization, and mental constitution, throughout the universe; and can no more credit that the complicated and orderly scheme, now under its cognition, could be due to mere blind forces, except as passive agents of a Living Power, than that the pyramids, towers, temples, and statues of the ancient world, to say nothing of the innumerable minor conveniences of life, could have arisen from a sort of crystalline aggregation of particles, specially moved by a mutual consent, and to the exclusion of others not less fitted to effect the result.

IV. So, in effect, thought these ancients, which made them draw such inferences of superhuman design and power from the objects before them. And yet, in these latter days, when this globe has been circumnavigated, and new lands and fresh wonders have been revealed to our astonished view; when the equator has been traversed, and its exact extent measured, and found to be but "*a very little thing*," as compared with the girth of other planets and suns; our own luminary alone being equal to twice the diameter of the moon's orbit round the earth, or about a million miles broad; when the ocean has been found to be of such astonishing depth, and, even at such depth, to be rich in animal and vegetable products almost beyond conception; when a new continent has been dis-



covered, with its Saint Lawrence, Mississippi, Amazon, La Plata, and Orinoco; and its vast sea-like lakes; when the mighty Himalaya and Andes ranges have been explored, with their towering conical peaks, and such a number of new and surprizing plants and animals, several of them heretofore well-nigh incredible, brought within the circle of our knowledge; when the essential volcanic significance of Vesuvius, Etna, Teneriffe, and Cotopaxi, is now apprehended; when the poles, with their hills and plains of ice, and their ice-bounded lakes, teeming with fertility of animal life, has been approached; and almost all the surface of the Earth has been more or less examined through nearly every range of latitude and longitude; when chemistry has demonstrated, that all the protean forms of nature are reducible to but a few primitive elements (which will probably be proved to be still much fewer), infinitely varied in their combinations by an infinite fund of contrivance; when Geology has laid open, to so great an extent, the secrets of more ancient phases of the world, measuring the durations of successive schemes of being by millions of years; when Physiology has explained, more fully, the amazing structure and uses of the complicated parts of living bodies; when the microscope has shown to us an infinitude of small animals and plants, past and present, quite transcending all efforts of the imagination to realize; and when, finally, Astronomy, with her telescope, and other still more recondite mathematical methods, has enabled us to estimate the distances, the sizes, the weights, and probable composition of our

surrounding planets and sun, and has also carried us from our own system, to the contemplation of other suns and systems; until, in the mysterious depths of that illimitable space, we descry the far-distant twinklings of innumerable orbs, each greater, perhaps, than our own sun; yet appearing only as a host of minute point-like spangles, or glittering clouds of diamond dust, gradually lessening into a mere haze of light, as it were, upon what we might, at first, fancy to be the verge of creation; but which, after all, is but the mere resting-place of our own overstrained faculties; until we can regather strength to adventure upon another, and another, and another series of flights through a never compassed immensity of worlds upon worlds; and, when we find that all this stupendous and complicated array of objects, terrestrial and celestial, is governed with an exactitude of motion, and law, and purpose, by which all tend to each others general and collective well-being, even while the whole is rushing through space with a marvellous velocity, must we not so much the more be overcome by the idea of their great Creator, and Disposer, at least, by so much more as our special knowledge of His vasty works exceeds the knowledge of ancient times?

V. It is to be admitted that, in these ancient times, many profound scientific doctrines existed in a theoretical and indefinite form; which yet had not been reduced to demonstration, such as the revolution of the planets round the sun, and, to a certain extent, the circulation of the blood, and the processes of digestion, respiration, and such like. It is also true that such theories lifted the


minds of the speculators up towards a designing Divinity. But it has been left for modern times to realize these and other doctrines in a demonstrative form, by a minuter analysis of intermediate causes, and, so far from such analysis leading us away from the consideration of intelligent causes to such as are merely blind and mechanical, the more they have been thus searched into, and realized, the more has the truly rational mind been freed both from base superstitions, and mere materialism—as specially instanced in the views of Harvey and Newton upon this subject—and led up to the grand ultimate conclusion of an universal, all-good, and all-powerful Designer; all-powerful; because of the infinite extent, and gravity of the work; all-good; because of the beneficent results of the work wherever our eyes or minds can carry us; universal, one, and indivisible; because all the infinite variety of forms, forces, and functions, so far as we can understand them, are made to work in a strictly co-operative manner, towards one end; namely, the general well-being, and happiness of this world, and the up-holding and preservation of all the worlds of space as a totality.

VI. Now, in so grand a review, as Cosmology thus takes of the entire theatre of creation, it is desirable, at this stage, to impress earnestly, upon every mind, the fact, that there is, and can be, in the Divine Spirit, no other than one great scheme, with one great science, or rather fund of thought for its foundation, and one great Spirit as the Father of such science, or philosophy, or rather Divine Wisdom; since, what we call science and

philosophy are but human methodical arrangements of those laws, the knowledge of which is educed by us from the action of the things of nature, and accepted as expressing the meaning and intent of the Author of Nature. Let the fact be enforced (for it is but a fact, though our analytic habits have tended to make us think otherwise), that the division of this one great scheme into distinct systems, each subject to some distinct science, is, as above said, only a human contrivance due to the natural limitation of the human mind, and its necessity of arriving at knowledge only by means of plodding research and reasoning, and, therefore, merely adapted to human convenience. For, in reality, there are no separate sciences in nature occupying independently any distinct sphere of action apart from all others. All is one grand Whole; yet a multiplex unity, reflective of the multiplex unity of the One All-consciously Creating and Sustaining God; being innumerable in what we call forms, and qualities, and functions; yet one and indivisible, as constituting the essential totality of created Being. Witness how inseparable are the metaphysical and physical sciences from each other; though, scholastically speaking, they are often viewed as almost contrary to each other. So far, however, from such seeming contrariety, or antithesis being real, the physical results are but the visible, or phenomenal exposition of those vivifying, creative, or originative principles which underlie them; and which spring metaphysically, as we actually do know, from the human, and ultimately, with as little doubt, from the Divine Mind. In fine, the whole scheme, or collec-


tive action of those sciences, as exhibiting a body of purposed law, points to a spiritual cause as its one efficient source ; for, when we ascend from the ordinary mechanical and chemical laws of non-organized matter, beautifully as these are illustrated in electric attraction, crystallization, and the like, and witness, in the vegetable world, the selection of organizable elements from the inert, or dead soil, to form compound molecules so different from the simpler combinations of the inorganic world ; the disposition thereof in endless chemical forms within the system—the formation of innumerable secondary and tertiary products for the express use of other beings—and the profuse multiplication of not only reproductive, but nutritive seeds, &c. ; all evidently guided by an infinite precision and speciality of contrivance ; and when, in the animal world, we witness the evolution of the body from a sort of formless germ, or albuminous fluid ; the gradual growth of complicated organs, each with its appointed functions—the conversion of the chyle into blood at the lungs—the innumerable juices and tissues, of ternary, and quaternary, and even greater complexity, all formed out of that identical blood, each one in its appropriate place, and by an appropriate apparatus—the continual waste and renovation of such juices and tissues ; whilst the personal, or mental identity is unchanged ; and the culmination of all this in the exhibition of affections, passions, sublime hopes, high moral sentiments, philosophical principles, and other manifestations of pure intellectuality, along with a guiding conscience, we are carried, by that intellectuality,

and through moral affinity, quite out of, and above, the ordinary stream of physical forces, and the mere so-called physical laws which rule them—and which might be asserted, by the materialists, to be simply other names for the eternally inherent properties of matter; though not, thereby, explaining how such properties belong not equally to all matter alike, or to the same matter at different times, or how they have been impressed thereon, and co-ordinated, as means to attain ends—We are thus launched, I say, upon an ocean of metaphysical dynamics, or mental and emotional originative powers, steadily working out their purposed objects, the horizon of which is but the threshold, so to speak, of that absolute infinitude of Creative and Governing Wisdom which we can certainly behold darkly, through this outer curtain-work of visible results; but into the fulness of whose essence, in our present state of being, we can never of ourselves enter; excepting in so far as we are thus raised by that limited leaven of the Primal Mental Light, which is expressed in that of our moral and intellectual consciousness, which consciousness instinctively, as well as rationally, recognizes this dazzling infinitude of spirituality, as the certain and only possible source of anything like plan, and especially of its own peculiar existence—an existence so keenly felt within, and beyond, the senses; and yet not through, or by them; but from, and by, itself alone; as permeating and enlivening every subordinate faculty of our conscious being, and pouring itself over, and beyond, the sphere of created things and their laws, even unto the Creative God Himself, as has already been shown; thus to know Him,



as the Divine Lord and Spiritual Father of all, that is to say, in His peculiarity as a moral and intellectual essence; however comparatively little we may be able to understand of that which is, on every side, and above, and below, perfectly unfathomable for ever.

VII. And, although this metaphysical, or moral source of causation, as only partially, but very certainly, known to ourselves by actual personal experience, be, undoubtedly, and utterly, different from physical, or passive causation, being with us only an interposition of mind to guide and direct the blind forces of nature; yet is the one so intimately connected with the other, that it carries itself, or its influences, quite forward through the subsequent series of sequences of the physical chains of cause and effect; even as the inventive understanding and will of man, upon a limited scale, are carried forward, vicariously, through a predestined arrangement of means to an end; as in the case of a clock, or self-acting musical instrument, or other still more complicated system of mechanism, being physical in the material; but mental in the construction and design. Without the recognition of such connection, and enduring metaphysical or moral and intellectual influence, such as is implied in the Hebraic mode of thinking, "*He who formed the eye, shall He not see? He who planted the ear, shall He not hear?*"—and admitted even by the materialists, in the operation of what they themselves cannot but call *laws*, the doctrine of design and intention, or, as it is called, final cause, could have no place in philosophy; though, to refuse it such place, were absurdly contradictory to our own self-consciousness as to motives and acts; and we



could do nothing more than grope backwards and backwards, for the discovery of one physical cause behind another; until we gazed, beneath the depth of ultimate facts, into a gulph of darkness, black, silent, and unfathomable, from which no sound, or other appreciable sign could be elicited, as any answer to our natural and reasonable, nay necessary and inevitable inquiries. Because, being forced, by the laws of mind, to admit the necessity of a First Cause, and, seeing that all sound thinkers must share the conviction of Newton that such First Cause could, certainly, not be a mechanical one; so, within and beyond the vast twilight abyss of doubt and ignorance, which exists, to us, within every object of nature, we discern, under this conviction, and by our supersensuous reason, which must, in common with all things else, have proceeded from such First Cause, the manifestations, even in mystery, of a Spiritual Light, of which our own souls are but faint planetary reflections, or images, or semblances; and, therefore, we are able to evoke from those very mysteries the sense of a Power which is not merely material, or mechanical; but in which the metaphysical, or moral and intellectual Essence of All-Originative Causation is eternally inherent; a Power that the more and more we ponder over it, the more and more of it we apprehend; by finding that all such mysteries when cleared up contain a meaning; until, not only this visible creation that presently shines so plainly before us; but all the inaccessible heights and depths of time, and space are felt to be necessarily filled with it; even as we feel, that in a

small degree, the lesser moral, and physical heights and depths of this social world, whether in science, law, arts, or polity, are filled and vivified, as it were, by those pre-ordained master minds who contrive, order, and govern them. The supersensuous reason is, here, to the soul, and its spiritual realm of thought and ideality; what the eye is to the body, and the outer universe of material forms; and hence there are innumerable spiritual truths clear to the former, that, in their very nature, are invisible to the latter; and, of all such truths, this conviction of the metaphysical or moral and intellectual Essence of the Eternal First, and only Real Cause is, unquestionably, the one grand source and centre from which they all flow, and to which they, likewise, all tend to adhere, as by a moral gravitation or affinity.

VIII. It is, indeed, by this law of metaphysical, or moral affinity, that all our faculties and feelings instinctively seek to group themselves around some adequate congenerous cause, to which they may refer their own existence, and all things else, the more and more strongly clinging to it, as all other imaginable sources of explanation and support are found to fail; until this vague and instinctive moral sense settles, by longer thought, into the substantial and clear conviction, that there must be a centralized and yet all-pervading fountain of mental light, from which all other mental lights have emanated, to which they all belong, and upon which they all depend. Wandering, as they do, through the mazes of the universe, amidst matter and its ordinary qualities, these faculties can find nothing having any

visible correspondence with themselves, excepting in those lower forms of life, which, certainly, did not generate us, any more than we could generate them; but, in all the arrangements, as effects of a cause, they perceive evidence of the workings of such feelings and faculties in such a degree of excellence as to be called perfect and infinite; and this infinity of perfection in mind and spirit they call, by a simple act of deductive affirmation—God; the original source of themselves and of all the innumerable contrivances by which matter is made to perform its millions of functions, resulting in a totality of beauty, grandeur, and happiness, that is utterly ineffable. This grandest of all the deductions of the supersensuous reason, from the effects that are visible or otherwise appreciable, to the One Primal and only true source of Cause that is as invisible, but yet as keenly appreciable as itself, is so perfectly clear, and so conformable to every principle of sound thinking, that its non-acceptance, where such faculty exists, may be again averred to be utterly impossible, or only to be accounted for by the faculty having worked itself into a state of confusion and distraction, by becoming entangled amidst contradictory subtleties beyond its powers of analysis, or of extrication of truth from error. For the similitude, or analogy, of this moral or metaphysical gravitation, or attraction, is seen, especially, in this universal and invariable fact, that, let the reason roam ever so erratically, and carry itself, by the most tortuous flights of sophistry, into regions ever so remote and unnatural; even though it be into the very hell of a wilful and devilish rebellion against the

adoration of God, or, what is nearly the same thing, a cool negation of any knowledge of Him, along with a repudiation of all law, except the one guiding rule of self-benefit ; it is still forced, in the end, to turn, as by a necessary law, to the practical recognition of the absolute dependence of itself, and everything else, upon some active First Cause, and that First Cause a conscious and rational one, be the other attributes, for good, or for evil, what they may. In such plight, this reasoning soul may, or may not, tremble ; according to its other accompanying convictions, or the temperament of its possessor ; but, we may confidently aver that it will feel a sense of responsibility, and, as to this one inevitable conviction, believe it must, if it exist itself at all ; for there is no other standing-point left for it ; whilst its nature remains what it is. It is, indeed, the alone focus from which its own powers of effort can trace their issue, or towards, or around which, it can ultimately move ; for it is felt to be, not figuratively only, but veritably, and as a matter of fact, the one central and originative moving Power of all other derived powers ; without, or beyond whose influence those others cannot go, and within whose supreme government they prove themselves to be by the very fact of their bodies, and also their minds in a very great measure, acting according to prescribed necessary conditions and laws—laws, that is to say, not innately begotten, and subsisting subordinately, as they must do in the Being of the Godhead Himself, as Sole Real Cause of all ; but extraneous, and superior, to themselves—paramount and all-potent ; and yet not self-induced ;

but traceable to this same central and all-pervading Spirit, who, self-conditioned, inspires, and co-ordinates, and conditions all these diverse laws to His own final plans and purposes, in, and over, this universe of time and space, and matter and mind.


IX. In like manner, as already stated, in regard to this unity of the various branches of knowledge and their objects, and the subordination of all things to moral causes, we have the pure abstract sciences sometimes represented as distinct from the applied sciences, or practical arts: Yet, what are the latter, but the simple fructification, or expression of the former; even although those who carry them out may not see it in that light; but rather the reverse; simply because they have never thought upon the subject; and because Providence has ordained, for obviously wise reasons, that practice, as an intellectual instinct, should precede theory in the common affairs of life, and that first, or fundamental truths should be the latest arrived at? Were it not so, the human family might have perished; while they were searching out the principles upon which life itself mainly depends. Yet, without the foregone, immutable, and essential truths—whether clearly recognised by the mental consciousness or not—of metaphysical and mathematical philosophy, where would be the basis, and consequently the existence of such so-called mere practical sciences as the mixed or applied mathematics, chemistry, and the various branches of mechanical and engineering arts? And, again, whilst we distinguish such highly theoretical sciences, as those just mentioned, from the seemingly

more natural sciences, which simply seek to embody a more methodical arrangement, and classification of external objects, such as merely descriptive Astronomy, Geography, Botany, Zoology, and the like; we must yet recollect that, in investigating either animate or inanimate matters, we can only recognise them, as the results of a complicated and finely combined application of all the aforementioned metaphysical, mathematical, chemical, and mechanical laws; if all of them, as laws, are not rather to be viewed as of a metaphysical nature and origin, since it is quite inconceivable that any other power than that of mind could ordain such laws. For, whether we may study a cloud, a mist, or the common air, or a drop of water, or a blade of grass, or an insect, or a fish, or quadruped, far more man himself; what do we find each of them to be, but a more or less complex epitome of the combined operation of all those powers and laws, miraculously, as it were, brought together, and rendered subservient to the production and support of an individuality, distinct from all other individualities; and yet composed of all this self-same variety of different elements, and co-operative forces, collected from the general universe, and imprisoned, or held firmly together, for special and temporary purposes, within itself, such purposes, as such, being derivable from none other than a metaphysical or spiritual Power?

X. While, therefore, it is not only allowable, but absolutely necessary, for men, by reason of the limitation, and nature of their faculties, to confine themselves to limited and special fields of observation, and to sub-divide

natural science, so as to fill the whole alphabetical circle of an Encyclopædia with such separate subjects as have just been spoken of; let us ever recollect, that there is, in very truth, but one grand Science, or Fund, of pure directive Wisdom, the exposition of which, and of the operation of its laws, is but a study of its Divine Author.—And while, also, as individuals, we must devote our energies more especially to our individual pursuits as statesmen, theologians, metaphysicians, physicians, chemists, mechanicians, naturalists, &c.; yet he only is to be accounted sound, and truly philosophical, who views the workings of his own special branch of science in relation to the amplitude of all nature, and recognises their connection with, and subserviency to, the entire scheme of creation, material and immaterial, as a whole, and as represented in Cosmology. For, after all, what kind of Theologian were he, however innately able, who merely learned from books to view God as an abstract Essence, or to name Him, in dead dogmatic words, or by verbal demonstration, as the Supreme Source of might and goodness; without realizing some actual conceptions of His Being and attributes, by a study of the vast fields of space, and their various contents, and then communing with his own heart as to the impressions thus made upon it; such impressions being the only genuine source of all true and valuable abstractions, viewed as ideas, and not as mere words? Could it be in the nature of such an one, possessing any vital sense of religion, to breathe only the air of a library, academy, or cloister, and to utter such pedantic verbal abstractions in school divinity, or even

the diviner sentiments of Scripture itself ; without going abroad into the outer world, to view for himself the majesty of nature, to study the workings of science and art, to observe the real doings and sufferings of the human mind and heart ; and not only so, but to join with all, to act in concert with all, and to sympathize with all, in consistency with the dictates of truth and purity ? And, even though the profounder, and more subtle, and solemn deductions of his religious reasonings, might be formed, as they generally are, in solitude, silence, and darkness ; yet of what efficacy for good were such deductions if they were only abstractions derived from books, and not from his own steadfast contemplation of facts actually observed by himself, treasured in his memory, and so arranged as to be available at will on every occasion ? For, seeing that the special duty of his office is not only to expound the attributes and laws ; but to enforce, by fervid eloquence, the adoration of God, and a devoted obedience to His will, whose wondrous works are perpetually pointed to in Scripture, he certainly could not do so effectually, without reference to these unspoken, as well as to what he accepts as the spoken words or revelations of the Creator, as emanating from the mouths of men specially inspired by Him ; and the former are to be found only in the open volume of nature. No one, in fact, is more called upon to be learned in these enigmatical and hieroglyphic, yet sufficiently interpretable, scrolls, than he whose vocation it is to study the ways of their Divine Author ; and point them out to his fellow-men. In following out such researches, he finds himself




best able to defend the relying faith that is in him ; by showing its consistency with a rational conviction of the truth, and will, in the whole course of his survey, as corroborative of such truth,

“ Find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.”

For a sound faith must be grounded in sound reason : otherwise all forms of faith would be equally acceptable ; which may be the case in relation to conscience alone, and speaking in a moral, but certainly not in an intellectual, sense.

XI. Or, again, what kind of metaphysician were he, who merely sought to enunciate deep principles in all their abstract coldness, or analyzed the faculties of mind into their dry elements, in order to show that they were reducible to such primary powers as those of perception, memory, judgment, and imagination, or invention ; and such affections as desire, and aversion, and conscience ; without having followed out the full sweep of the intellectual forces in their actual applications to philosophy, literature, scientific invention, and art ; or traced the mighty operations of the passions and affections, and conscience, as exhibited in history and poetry, &c. ; until he recognised, in such thoughts, passions, and actions of men, a veritable, though very diminutive, and too often distorted, image of that Mind of minds, and Spirit of spirits, under whose supreme influences we are, after all, only as “ *clay in the hands of the potter ;* ” yet, not merely divinely moulded in body ; but also divinely inspired with



thoughts that point to that highest region of spirituality which we call Heaven, and, furthermore, rendered conscious of such inspiration, and of the Primal Source from which it has been derived.

XII. And so, also, what kind of mathematician were he, who only studied, as upon a board, or tablet, or in a book, or in his own mind, the abstract relations of lines, and spaces, and weights, forms, dimensions, and numbers to one another, even as the blind might do; without enlarging, and thoroughly realising, his views, and seeing throughout all creation the grand and beautiful harmonies which result from the operation of these mathematical laws, or principles; and prove them to be paramount over those of all the physical sciences, whether as represented in architecture, engineering, music, or any other pursuit of social life; in the endless measurements, and calculations of astronomical science, and the equally endless divisions and sub-divisions of atomic inquiry—inquiry that carries us, with its simple and compound infinities in smallness, as far beyond the most minute microscopical objects, in a descending, as the immensity of space carries us beyond the vastest of them in an ascending, scale of magnitude.

XIII. And, again, in regard to the master in language and grammar, what were his kind of knowledge, if he should limit his views to words alone, and their various synonymes, derivations, inflections, accents, and connections with each other; instead of extending them to the things themselves; and who should compose according to dogmatic rules of syntax, without searching out how such

rules, to be thoroughly correct, must exactly express the processes that occur in nature and in the human mind. It would be as if one could give names to a whole armoury of tools, without perceiving the infinity of effects to be produced by their use ; or, if he did so, without recognizing those complicated processes of thought by which such causes are moulded to the attainment of such effects. He would be, literally, a verbal, and not a real scholar. It seems, indeed, almost incredible that any one so occupied in attaining a knowledge of the means, should overlook the great end of all such labour, namely, a familiarity with the thoughts and reasonings of the authors, and the objects, and acts of the persons, and the things, to which such authors refer. Yet, as it is too well known that such an order of scholars not only does exist ; but that some of them have an inordinately high opinion of their special pursuit, coupled with a sort of contempt of every other ; it seems proper, at this point, to show conclusively, that what they mistake for the chief end of mental effort, is only, in fact, a sort of preparatory beginning. For, though such preparation, by an acquaintance with language and letters, is certainly essential, as a key, towards the acquisition of every kind of knowledge whatsoever ; and, though it be a very lofty study of itself, as representing the action and deliberate expression of mind by signs, yet, having acquired such literary accomplishment in the highest degree, it is still certain, that no mental culture is really deserving of the name that sets aside, as unworthy of notice, the study of what are called the physical sciences, physical, but yet with

their mental or metaphysical foundation, as shown in the operation of their governing laws. Because, these so-called physical sciences, or rather sciences of the physical world, with their metaphysical basis, are, in their totality, only another name for as full and sound a knowledge of nature as we can attain; and nature, being the great work of God, and, so far as it goes, the visible, or phenomenal exposition of His attributes, it therefore follows, that so much knowledge thereof is exactly equivalent to so much knowledge of God and His attributes. But, in studying nature, we find all the branches of natural science, or knowledge, subordinate to, and dependent upon, the absolute, eternal, and mental principles of the mathematics; inasmuch as each one of them involves a necessary precognition of size, number, weight, proportion, and form; and as such ideas of size, number, weight, proportion, and form, along with all their external relations and applications, can be evolved only by a reaction of the mind upon time, and space, and material nature; and, as the evolution of such ideas in their internal, or abstract relation to each other, can be attained only by the reaction of the mind upon itself, and its own thoughts, in a strictly metaphysical manner; and also, as such reaction of the mind upon nature and its own thoughts ultimately leads, as we have seen, to the recognition of a congenerous spiritual Essence, infinitely above and beyond nature and itself, which congenerous Spiritual Essence we accept as God, a knowledge of whose Being is, except by the materialists, admittedly the one great object of all our pursuits in learning, or the

higher mental cultivation ; and, finally, as such grand object cannot be even well approached, except by the above described processes of thought : so such processes of thought are essential to such learning, or higher cultivation of scholarship ; which amounts to saying, that the bald, dry knowledge of synonyme and syntax, above alluded to, is, comparatively, a barren acquisition ; excepting in the valuable assistance which it lends to the exercise of the loftier faculties in those more real matters of which this literature is only the record. For, even as ordinary books of History are but shadowy recitals of the actual thoughts and deeds of men and nations ; so, all ordinary literature is but an ideal exposition of the things, thoughts, and deeds that have filled, and stirred into intellectual activity, the minds of its authors. Such authors have drawn from the general fund of nature, including themselves as derived beings, the material and the spirit of every idea of which they are possessed ; and all the beauties and sublimities of the painter, the poet, and the rhetorician ; and all the grand results of the ratiocinations of the philosophers, are, therefore, but unfoldings, or revelations, of the original facts and principles to be found in the magazine of material nature and of life—unveilings, as it were, of portions of the eternal and universal truth, modified, it may be, by the peculiar genius of the mental alembic through which they have passed ; but, certainly not, on that account, rendered anywise perfect ; though some may be immeasurably better than others. Doubtless, in so far as a real and full knowledge of words goes, their effectual

study would imply an equally effectual study of the minds that invented, and the things represented by, them: but how very evident it is, that scarcely two minds can attach the same idea to numbers upon numbers of words, signifying, as they do, to one set of persons, only the bare external aspect of the object, be it a star, a mineral, a vegetable, or an animal; while to others, they mean a more or less complicated assemblage of laws, qualities, powers, and relations, according to the respective capacities of the various observers. As has been said by the Poet of such an one as the former,

“ A primrose by the river’s brim,
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more,”

whereas, to those of a different mind, whether they contemplate a rock, or this primrose, or a tree, a bird, a fish, a quadruped, or a man, they see something infinitely more than the mere size, form, colour, and action thereof, that something more being drawn from an inexhaustible well, of whose waters all may drink according to their thirst and capacity; but to the last depth, or final source of which, no finite mind can possibly penetrate, either now or hereafter:—So true is it that to those of the furthest insight there is found to be a deep below deep; even in those pools of knowledge that, to the shallow-minded, appear shallowest; for it is, indeed, that great ocean of mystery out of which our discoverers are ever evolving fresh meanings from year to year, and from age to age.

XIV. So, also, with the applied sciences, especially as blended together under the composite science of Medicine. What manner of physician were he, who, after the manner of the darker ages, viewed his calling only as an art by which he learned, usefully it might be, but yet quite empirically, that this or that specific medicament was curative, somehow or other, of this or that specific malady; without having duly studied the complicated structure and functions of living bodies, and taken into account the exact correspondence, and relationship which subsist between such complicated structures, and the nature of the outward creation by which they are surrounded, and of which they form but a part; as in the adaptation of the eye and the ear to the laws of light and vibration; the like adaptation of the lungs for the oxygenation of the blood and maintainance of heat in the body; of the various forms of the teeth and stomach to the various sorts of food; of the heart and vessels to hydraulic laws; and of all parts to the soil of the Earth, to which they are attached, and from which, chemically and vitally speaking, they grow? In fine, if he did not consider, all the elements which are essential to perfect health, and all the deprivations, or positively adverse influences, which are productive of disease; with a view to secure the first, and ward off the second or subdue it, by some counteracting agency when it did arise? It is unnecessary, in this general treatise, to enter minutely into illustrations of these adaptations of the various anatomical structures, and physiological functions, to the external world; such as are expected to be familiar to

the minds of physicians and naturalists ; but it is sufficient, for the prime purpose now in view, to show that we cannot study any one such science, without discovering the absolute necessity of becoming acquainted with many more ; insomuch, as already said, that we could not proceed to the attainment of a competent acquaintance even of any familiar creature, such as a dog, or a cat, with their furs, teeth, claws, digestive and respiratory organs, bones, joints, and muscles for locomotion ; eyes, ears, nose, and so forth, without requiring, at every step of our progress, to dive into fresh collateral investigations in mechanics, chemistry, pneumatics, hydrostatics, acoustics, optics, and indeed, every other pursuit of the kind. Thus we have to gather such branches of knowledge in detail, and by dint of the most arduous labour ; while, within one limited organism, we find all of them epitomised, and co-ordinated towards the accomplishment of a special end or purpose, by the supreme Originator of all. So interdependent, within created things, are all the sciences, each one upon another ; and so defective must he be who, while devoting his energies chiefly to one sphere, as he must do, fails to use the light which is shed upon it from other sources, and upon every side.

XV. Thus, whilst we, from the nature of our faculties, and our sensuous constitution of body, have to disentangle complexities, and trace, in this manner, from nature up to God ; firstly, by collecting proofs of mechanical, chemical, and vital contrivances from the various objects that meet our observation ; and next, from such mechanical, chemical, and vital contrivances, educing

further proofs of the mathematical, and metaphysical laws, or principles, which underlie them, and which strike more particularly home, as things of a kindred essence, upon our own intellectual constitution, and are thus felt to have emanated more immediately from the Divine Spirit or Will, as outpourings of its own attributes of Mental Being; yet we must recollect that, throughout the whole of this mental process, though the primary power be internal, our course is chiefly of a groping and retrospective kind; and even,—“great things with small to compare”—even as from the size, and proportions, and details of plan, in a mighty architectural edifice, or other intellectual work of man, in music, poetry, general literature, invention, or philosophy, we carry our inferences from its study, back to the originator thereof; so are we unavoidably compelled, from the very nature of the reasoning faculty, to carry back our thoughts from the fabric and garniture of the Heavens and the Earth, to the Great Author of All: And even, also, as we had, before estimating the genius of the human builder, to analyse the relationships which each basement, pillar, architrave, and tower, and the hundred other minuter parts—to say nothing of the hidden but most important contrivances of the foundation—had to one another, and to the general design and use of the work; while he, the planner, projected the whole, and much more than we can at once see, perhaps by one masterly and spontaneous effort of cultivated genius; so, before duly approximating to any worthy idea of God, we must first carefully study His works in detail; but yet correlatively as one whole;

in a spirit of sincerity, and with an earnest thirst for the knowledge of Him and His; not as prejudicating in the matter; but as having minds and hearts open to conviction of the truth. And, indeed, such a spirit must imbue any one who so engages himself under true fundamental principles, and learns, out of all that is known, how very little it is as compared with that which is not known; and that, however learned he may be esteemed, humanly speaking, his learning is but as dust in the balance, or as a drop in the ocean, and that, with it all, he can realise only a hazy glimpse of that illimitable Omniscience of Spirit, which, by the exercise of its beneficent power, brought into existence all the vast systems, and all the countless organisms of immensity, to work in unison and harmony, as at a stroke, or word. That omnific Will, or Ever-germinating and Supreme Root of all rationality, as seen in man, and in the general universe, he recognises in the perpetual dance of atoms, never ending, still beginning, which is observed throughout all nature, and which he sees acting with more special objects amongst the elements of living plants and animals; he hears that same "still voice" in the quiet origin, and gentle bubblings, of fountains; in the soft descent of snow, and drizzling showers, and dews; in the noiseless progress of this vast Earth, and still vaster heavenly bodies; in the still, but omnipotent Forces of gravitation, cohesion, and chemical and other forms of attraction in common or so-called inert matter; and in the silent workings of his own mind. It is louder heard in the wild tossings and roarings; yet not the less apparent in the

silent spawnings of the fathomless deep. It startles him in tempests, and in the violent belchings of volcanoes ; which yet, as he knows, only act as safe outlets for those internal fires of molten rock, which have smouldered beneath us, unseen and unheard, except in such outbursts, through the days, and the nights of countless ages. He feels its beneficent influences in the steady revolution of his Earth round the sun ; with its polar axis so inclining towards the plane of its orbit, as to insure the grateful and useful alternations of the seasons, as well as the tides and the trade-winds so conducive to human welfare : And, finally, he is overwhelmed with a full, yet unequal, sense of its omnipotence, as he beholds the endless array of suns, planets, and comets, all wheeling through the abyss of space, with unimaginable rapidity, his own globe at about twenty miles a second, and others at an infinitely swifter rate ; and yet all in perfect order, and telling, as by mere matter of fact alone, so strongly upon the faculties of the understanding, that imagination itself halts, in astonishment, to find that her powers are unequal even to the first few series of this infinite scale of progressions within the reality—and that the “*thunder of the power,*” as Job expresses it, let her soar as long and as loftily as she pleases, is still constantly found to be just as near, and also as far off, as ever.

XVI. Thus, as the mind reviews all those varied and endless modulations of this same primordial “*Word,*” or moral fountain-head, and internal vitalising idea of all things, and brings them into correlation with one another, it begins to see that, though there may be many sub-

ordinate sciences, each embracing a limited and selected knowledge of different parts or powers, or qualities, of the totality of Infinitude; yet that there is but ONE Science of sciences, One fundamental Divine Philosophy, or formative and controlling intellectuality, which is a direct functional emanation from the Creative Spirit, and runs, like an universal and indestructible mesh-work of mental or spiritual light and energy, connecting all the various elements and Forces of nature by one common bond, as of involution; ubiquitous, eternal, and omnipotent; not to be altered under the catalytic dispersion of any temporary combination of such elements and Forces; but ever surviving to guide and govern them, in their fresh and repeated combinations and separations through time and in eternity. This is that very Spirit of all-efficient Causation, the grand Cause of causes, which Aristotle recognised of his own natural reason, and to which he gave the name of the Cosmic Force, or Supreme Force of Thought; and it is, verily, even such a Power, but also something infinitely more; for, when the mind of man perceives, as the result of the exercise of such Force or Power, not merely mathematical, and chemical, and mechanical, or even ordinary vital perfections, such as might be imagined, however wildly or erroneously, to belong inherently to the nature of matter, and to be as they are, simply because somehow or other they could not be otherwise; but innumerable special, exceptional, and complicated and startling organisations; and here and there special exceptions to laws, along with the consciousness within himself of a metaphysical sense

of beauty, and sublimity, moral happiness, wisdom, love, and, above all, sense of duty, it is not in consistency with his nature, or daily experience of such things, or in accordance with his own spiritual appetences, or reason, to call it a mere Force of Thought, or unsentimental, and non-emotional Power—for that were altogether inadequate to express what he actually sees and feels—but he is obliged, under conviction, and of pure mental necessity, to call it the express Essence, in moral and intellectual Personality, of an all-conscious God, that is, a reason-ruling, love-abounding, and uncreate Being, above all lesser Laws, Forces, and Powers; Himself the Sole Source of all such derived laws, forces, and powers; the Beginner, and the Ender of all things; Himself without any conceivable beginning, or any conceivable end;—the Moral Governor of a moral, as well as a physical, universe, and a Being existing in perfect sympathy with all His conscious offspring, lovingly caring for them in their minutest needs, and ordering them all, either directly or indirectly, according to the ultimate purposes of His own Omnipotent Will.

XVII. Still further to illustrate this distinctive character of Cosmology, or Cosmo-theology, as a philosophy embracing and blending into an unity all the other sciences—inasmuch as the proof of this fact must be regarded as the prime argument demonstrative of the unity, and infinity of the Godhead—let it be remarked, how all such divisional sciences and arts are but reflections, or imitations, of that which has been already discovered in the grand theatre of Creation, material and immaterial.

For example, such sciences as those that are simply descriptive of that which is apparent to sight in Astronomy, Geography, Zoonomy, Botany, Mineralogy, and so on, are, or ought to be, merely methodical transcripts of what is observed to exist in a certain form of order, and correspondence; which order and correspondence, are not any inventions of ours, but the work of nature, which work we but describe as we find it. The principles of the mathematics, when not axiomatic, arise within us altogether from the observation of the relative numbers, proportions, positions, dimensions, weights, and forms of external things; either as impressed upon us according to the unalterable fundamental laws of mind; or as reproduced in imagination upon the face of space, and subjected to the operations of our comparing and reasoning powers. Metaphysical philosophy, based upon the innate axioms of the consciousness and reason, springs entirely from our looking inwards, and reflecting upon the operation of our feelings, passions, and intellectual faculties; and then turning to other objects, and recognising evidence of the action of similar powers within, and upon, them, more or less directly manifested. And so, also, the cognate sciences of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, are but the practical exposition and exercise of such mental faculties, according to those natural laws, the following of which are found to be most conducive to the elucidation of truth, and productive of the greatest power, clearness, and beauty of expression. As it is said there were great heroes before Agamemnon; so there were indeed great reasoners before Aristotle; who only methodised

those laws of thought which were already, not only pre-existent in nature; but in actual practical operation. Chemistry, as a human science, is but an exposition of the results of experience, quite apart from any known abstract principles, or eternal certitudes, such as those of metaphysics and mathematics; inasmuch as no one, without previous experiment, could predicate that the union of the gases Hydrogen and Oxygen could form liquid water, or solid ice; or that carbon, or hydrogen would burn; or that the mild sulphur, with oxygen, would form the intensely corrosive Sulphuric Acid; or that the same corrosive Acid would unite with the equally corrosive caustic Potassa, to form an innocuous salt; and so on with thousands of other equally startling combinations, although, no doubt, there are necessary laws of reason overruling those facts of experience, though, as yet, by us, unseen. Where even universal, or what we call, necessary principles are recognised as governing the facts and reasonings of all the other sciences, they are not invented, but only evoked, by us, from nature, where not already innately implanted within ourselves as a portion of nature; being often but expressions of certain invariable and all-pervading facts, the real fundamental essence of which, as in gravitation, &c., quite transcends our consciousness, even as the precise nature and immediate origin of the consciousness transcends itself; however self-evident as a fact. So bound up is all with all, in mutual interdependence, that even as every material thing has a metaphysical aspect, which is, indeed, not merely an aspect, but the very

foundation and substance of its being—inasmuch as we have not one tittle of evidence that matter is anything at all to, or by, itself—so the most subtle abstract conceptions of being, quality, condition, or other relation, though having no distinctive material representatives in the outer world, are yet inseparable from some association with those matters in which they are made to be inherent ; or to which they appear to have some mysterious, yet obvious, analogy ; as mind with light ; mental energy with physical force or motion ; and emotional hardness or softness with those respective properties in common matter ; so much so, that those very ideas connected with our moral sensibilities, and even with the Being of God Himself, as we have seen, are not capable of being efficiently conveyed from mind to mind, excepting by the employment of words, that are replete with suggestions of the concrete, and which, indeed, could not have been invented without a close intimacy with the material universe. Yea, even if innate ideas be admitted—and we must, at least, admit of innate principles of thought and action, and purely mental abstractions and necessary mental truths—it must also be admitted that we did not, independently, create such things, nor our minds in which they are made to subsist ; but that we ourselves, with all our faculties and feelings, are only a portion of the created universe ; more or less connected with every other portion of the infinite totality ; though most especially with its Spiritual Author, as evidenced by this tendency of mind to penetrate the surface of material things, and arrive, through moral affinity, at some know-

ledge of the kindred principle that alone could give them any intelligible significance, or endow them with their present powers, and potentialities for future phases of being, according to laws of fixed, and beautiful order.

XVIII. As to the arts, and their derivation from nature, what are sculpture and painting, &c., but more or less successful attempts to copy the superficial appearances of reality? What is architecture, but an application of natural contrivances to the construction of artificial edifices; when we consider how a building, by its foundations, is rooted in the earth like a rock or tree, that the pillars are patently copies of the lopped trunks of trees, or of the limbs of man and animals; that the arches, the domes, and the spires, so long of being devised, and upon which the ingenuity of man so much and justly prides itself, are all witnessed in a variety of shells, in eggs, in the skulls and ribs of men and animals, in towering flower-stalks, and in the natural caverns, arches, roofs, and pinnacles of rock or ice; that the tiles and slates which protect us from the weather, are but coarse imitations of the scales of reptiles and fishes, and the protecting coverings of plants, &c., that the pavements so beautifully variegated are surpassed by the tessellated surfaces of sea-shells, and of sundry fishes, insects, reptiles, and quadrupeds; all of them so far self-subsisting, or at least, self-reparative within assigned limits; and, finally, that the curves, volutes, and other minor means of strength, or ornamentation, are all direct copies, either of outward objects, or of parts of such objects, though it certainly requires a mind like unto the original producer to apply such things as we do?

XIX. Then the mechanical inventions, of which we boast so much as triumphs of human genius—and which, undoubtedly, they are, as products of a derived faculty of thought—have they not all existed in nature from the beginning, under forms co-adapted to thousands of different objects—prototyped for us in the magazine of creation, and inviting our study for purposes of still advancing good? So much, indeed; have they so been, and so universally recognised, though, too often, in a careless and unprecise manner, that even the most brilliant inventions and discoveries of this kind, often appear to the multitude “*so simple and so natural*,” as they say, after they have been explained to them, that the chief cause of wonder, in their minds, is frequently, not so much from their being introduced for use, as from their not having been adopted from the examples of nature long before; even, also, as some of the most novel and profound declarations of great thinkers in metaphysics, mathematics, morals, and statesmanship, &c., have, by such persons, been contemptuously sneered at, as old and and self-evident; as, indeed, they all certainly are very old; though only self-evident, as useful truths, when clearly and forcibly enunciated; their highest value consisting, not in their instinctive recognition by mind, as obvious practical facts in daily life, and even amongst animals; but in the weight, sharpness, and precision of their significance as logical instruments, and their consequently peculiar applicability as certitudes, and touchstones for the settlement of remotest truths; truths so far beyond the sphere of all present, or possible

experience that, but for their out-growth from those self-evident facts, or axioms of the reason, such as are congenital with mind itself, and essential to all forms of real self-conscious mind, they must have remained as inscrutable to man, as they are, and ever must be, to those lower animals which are denied all those powers of contemplation by which the little spiritual rill of a human consciousness, perceiving the insufficiency of all its human progenitors, takes cognisance of its original source, not as in the spring or lake of the mountain, however distant; but as in the reactions of a Sun, so to speak, or beneficent Power of Thought and Will, upon that great deep of real or moral Being to which it feels itself bound in all the vicissitudes of its varied and subtle existence. And yet, as already observed, these first principles of thought are not devised by the human mind for itself; but have been implanted, so as to exist within it as a necessary part of the conscious self from its first assumption of activity, growing with its growth, and strengthening with its strength; excepting in those instances of aberration in which the mind—often miscalled ingenious—has sought to stifle, as by moral suicide, its own prime functions, and so become unfitted for any processes either of practical, or speculative thinking.

XX. And so, in like manner, with all other contrivances of man; both himself and they being derived from preceding powers, made to be inherent in nature; but coming from God. Thus, so far as the physical examples go, in the formation of a ship, we have not only the prototypes of floating masses of timber, with the

branches acting as sails, and also water-fowl, such as the swan, with its sail-like wings, its paddle-feet, and rudder-tail; but we have the beautiful Nautilus itself, whose very name speaks of the recognised resemblance. The steam-power is but a natural force, the result of natural laws in perpetual operation, skilfully regulated, and applied by man to the movement of mechanical adaptations of pistons, rods, valves, levers, saws, screws, knives, and hammers, all of which, as mechanical principles, already exist in nature; the same force of steam, or other elastic fluid, having of old upheaved islands, and continents, and projected their entrails as from colossal engines of artillery. In weaving, we have been pioneered by the spider, and caterpillar, &c. The principles of the lever, the pulley, and the wedge, &c., are already illustrated in our animal structures; while the capillary movement is seen, universally, in vegetable, as well as in animal tissues. The screw and augur are prefigured in the implements of those creatures that will bore through the hardest oak, not by direct force; but by this peculiar motion of the spiral notch in the cone. A hammer is but a coarse and stiff imitation of the arm and clenched hand. Tongs, and pincers, and vices are but iron fingers, and thumbs. Telescopes and microscopes are but multiplications of well adapted lenses; similar to those of the eyes of men and animals. Clarionets, flutes, trumpets, and other wind instruments, are simply imitations of the vocal organs; and stringed instruments are but the result of the natural laws of vibration, the Pandean pipes, and the Æolian harp having, no doubt,

been suggested to their first inventors by the musical moanings of the winds, as they crept, or rushed along, the sedgy banks of lakes, or rivers, and awakened the hidden tones of the dried reeds and withered strings of the dead vegetation; and, although, no doubt, the mental appreciation of such sweet or grand chords, was an essential element of the musical culture, without which there could have been no recognition of musical beauty, or grandeur; yet that very sense of melody and harmony comes from a source far other than ourselves. The swallow is an expert plasterer; the wren and the field-mouse, with numerous others, are skilful upholsterers. The beaver is a masterly builder, felling his own wood, and making, and carrying, and applying his own mortar. There is no greater economist of space than the bee, with his regular six-sided cells, by which no portion of space can be possibly lost; and which certainly does not happen, merely because nothing else could take place; else how should men so often blunder in their attempted economy of space; notwithstanding their ability to study the principles of mathematics, so utterly unknown to the bees, as such? Has mortal art ever excelled the beautiful curves, and proportions, and superbly rich colours of sea-shells; or rivalled those infinite and startling varieties of colour in the plumage of parrots, or birds of paradise, &c., &c., or eclipsed the gildings, as it were, of humming birds, and of sundry varieties of butterflies, and beetles, &c.? The powers of heat and cold, and pressure and expansion, &c., &c., by which we work out our peculiar purposes, are all ready found for us in nature's repository;

and, indeed, if we entered fully into such subjects, as we do at present only cursorily, and by way of illustration of the general principle of the dependence of all things upon God, we should find, that there not only is not, but, in the nature of things, there never can be, anything absolutely new under the sun, as a contrivance of man, or any other form of finite Being, whether angel or arch-angel, since, if ought could ever appear as really novel and original, such as many perfect or ideal mathematical forms, and musical, philosophical, and poetical combinations, which we are wont to call original, and which, like other abstract ideas may not be discoverable in their ideal perfection and integrity in external nature so far as we have seen it, the question would still recur as before—Who contrived this contriver?—For, certainly, he is not of himself—he has no self-subsistence in any sense of the term, and knows still more surely, if possible, that he has no self-endowing powers, nor any certain assurance as to his own bodily existence, or that of his race, even for the period of one second of time. He does feel, and know, that a divine spiritual light is within him, whose attributes are in utter contrariety to those of matter; but, at the same time, he feels and knows that it is a borrowed light; and, though percolated, in a most mysterious manner, through all, is, certainly, not really derived from any one, or more, of all his human ancestors; but only from the Creator of all living beings in common, the sundry attributes of which can arise from the Will of the Supreme alone, as First and moral Cause, or Eternal Spiritual Fund, and Final Source of all other

forms of Being. Man, in this Earthly sphere, is at the head of the local, but, how far from being at, or near, the head of the Universal, scale, will be most apparent to those who have already ascended to the highest summits of knowledge and thought in this life, and found what molehills, as it were, they are, in comparison with the unapproachable heights of that Infinitude, which can be embraced only by Him—

“Unspeakable! who sitt’st above these Heavens,
To us invisible, or dimly seen,
In these, His lowest works.”


“Him first, Him last, Him midst, and without end.”

D. N.

PART FOURTH.

OF THE IDEA CONCERNING GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES, IN RELATION TO MORAL AND PHYSICAL ORDER, AND SO-CALLED MORAL AND PHYSICAL EVIL.

I. Now, in all the things just spoken of, we apprehend, at once, how they might be intended to conduce to the happiness of men; but, there are other matters that appear, at first sight, as evils and inconveniences, and continue to be, practically, treated as such, by the vast majority of mankind as individuals, which yet, upon reflection, and on viewing them in connection with surrounding affairs, prove to be highly beneficial. Thus, on the moment, we might, and practically, and from individual inconvenience, we too often do, consider such phenomena as tempests, snows, and floods; barren rocky mountains, volcanoes, and earthquakes; storms by sea and land, wild rapacious animals, noisome insects, and hideous reptiles and fishes—and the more terrible passions of man himself—as evils almost unmixed. Yet, although many of them must ever be looked upon as evils in a certain sense—inasmuch as this world is admittedly imperfect, and nothing can be really perfect except God



—they are not purely evil: but clearly tend to the general, or supreme good, under all the circumstances of the case. Many agencies that are terrible evils when in excess, are the most positive and necessary blessings when moderated by the superintending powers of Providence. Heat, as a notable example, when in excess, is utterly destructive, at least of the present identity of all forms of matter; and yet it is the prime condition under which all living beings exist. Abstract that vivifying principle, and earth and sea would be one common congealed mass, the atmosphere itself solidified, and life, throughout all the globe, extinguished, in all its manifestations. There would be a return, in short, to chaos, or something worse. But, tempered so exactly as it is; how striking is the change from winter to summer! As additional heat and light are evolved, nature assumes a renovated form; seeds dormant in the ground, find their way through almost every obstacle, and will twist their offshoots into the most fantastic contortions, in order to arrive at their other fostering principles of moisture, air, and light. The buds are perfected into branch, leaf, and blossom; the flower glows with beauty; the fruits are refined to a nectar sweetness; the golden harvests wave; and men and animals rejoice in plenty and delight. This, in northern latitudes, but, let us look at sunnier climates, in the regions of the tropics; where we behold this heat, in all the exuberance of creative force; with everything gigantic and in perpetual growth; tree commingling with tree in the struggle for space; the soil moving, and the air buzzing, with insect life; warming

grateful spices; rich perfumes; precious gums and balsams; sugar surpassing honey: all these teeming on every hand, and scarcely requiring man's cultivation of them; but almost solely the result of heat and its accompaniments; yet under the conditions of a Divine Governance: For life, as already urged, is not a mere convertible term, or analogue, or modification, of heat; otherwise the greater the heat the greater would be the life manifestations, just as steam is in precise proportion to the amount of water from which, under the same circumstances, it is generated; but, on the other hand, while it is one of the necessary conditions, in the present world, for the manifestations of life, the increase of which, in a certain measure, increases the life-growth; it must, yet, be present only in certain precise degrees, and, not only so, but according as each proportion thereof may be most suitable to one or other form of being; and according to the primal constitutional law of the embryonic germ; such law being the specific dominating cause, by which all the subsidiary elements of the growth, above spoken of, are rendered conformable to the special ends of the respective organisations.

II. As for tempests, the same hurricane that sweeps over Earth and Sea, and carries, as it would seem, in certain places, nothing but devastation in its course, is obviously intended, and certainly proceeds, to clear the nooks and crannies of the globe of all impurities; to renew the vivifying properties of the air; and to correct any undue loss of equilibrium in regard to temperature, chemical constitution, or electric tension therein. The

snows and the floods, though often causing local inconvenience, are yet the main means whereby a store of moisture is laid up against the time of vegetative activity. The bleak mountains are the fertile sources of rivers; volcanoes, as already observed, are the safety-points for all the superfluous energies of the internal fire; and earthquakes, of which these volcanoes are the product and outlet, are but accidental, as we say in our ignorance, or, at all events, irregular excesses of the same expansive force. But for the storms of ocean, and the heaving tides, that vast abyss would become a stagnant mass of corruption; generating the poison of death to all living. Rapacious animals, which, be it remembered, are all of superior intelligence and organisation, as compared with the mere grazers and sleepers, are a means of keeping the over-productiveness of the latter in check, who would, otherwise, overrun the whole surface of the ground, and they, also, have thus more speedily prepared wide tracts of land for the habitation of man. And, although it might seem that the violent deaths which result from the predacious instincts of man and such animals were a cruel ordination, we have to recollect, at the same time, that such sudden and rapid destruction as follows the leap and stroke of lion or tiger, or the spear, or arrow, or rifle-shot, of man, is but as a brief matter compared with the enjoyments of the rest of the life, and is, also, a far less evil than that which would attend the heavy and prolonged sufferings from old age, chronic disease, and consequent slow starvation, amongst such creatures as those we now speak of. It is known that the deaths of

those animals are associated with much less pain than that which characterises the slower decay of civilised man, with his finer moral ties, and keener consciousness of mind "looking before and after;" yet even he himself is ready to admit that, so far from such sufferings being pure and unmixed evils, they are, upon a general review of the subject, found to be the most highly conducive to the purification, and exaltation of his moral nature, cleansing it, as by a baptism of fire, of all foolish self-sufficiency, base conceit, and vain-gloriousness; such as he is apt to indulge, while in the fulness of health and wealth, and mental energy, he surveys, with satisfaction, the grandeur of his position in creation, in comparison with the other forms of life which surround him; but forgets, meanwhile, the origin of his existence, and his eternal dependence upon the One Source of Creation, and of all good. Death itself, as a simple annihilation of conscious activity, and quite abstracted from all association with pain, may be viewed as a positive evil, or, at least an utter denial of good, to such animals as individuals; but, most undoubtedly, the succession of being for which it makes room, multiplies, to an inconceivably vast degree, this gift of consciousness impressible upon these innumerable forms of organisable matter; besides which, and above all other possible arguments, death, or a change of some kind, is inevitable to every created entity; which must necessarily have a beginning, or an end, or both; otherwise, it would be eternal and unchangeable, a contradiction to its own nature, and not a creature at all; but of the Essence of God Himself; as being thus

possessed of His special attributes of perpetual endurance, and immutability.

III. Nor, in relation to this matter of bodily death, should we here lose sight of that special secondary provision, by which all plants and so many animals, proceed to dispose of all dead organisms, which to others are so unsightly, so loathsome, and so hurtful. The dead vegetation of the past year is the food of the living vegetation of the next; so far as it may be sufficiently decomposed for absorption. That which animals eat of the vegetable world, or of their own allied orders, is, also, returned to the earth for this same purpose of vegetable nutrition, and both of these orders of being, the vegetable and the animal, are so reciprocally co-adapted to each other, that the gaseous excretions of each are, also, exactly fitted for the maintenance of a just balance in the constituents of the atmosphere; the refuse of the one being the food of the other, which is again changed into fresh food for herbivorous animals. For the rest, we have innumerable insects, and animalcules, that soon clear off, beneficially to themselves, as well as to others, all other refuse and ordure, and eat up even the most gigantic fallen trunks of the natural forests. The dog, and his kindred tribes, amongst quadrupeds, and the vulture and crow kinds, &c., amongst birds, are also destined to play a similar part with masses of dead and putrefying flesh. The Ibis, for instance, rids Egypt of the excess of vermin generated in the warm mud of the Nile; while the adjutant bird, with carrion crows, jackalls, and many others, in the East Indies, are ever

ready to clear off the decaying offal of these and similar hot regions. The white ant quickly disposes of the flesh of any dead animal, so as to leave nothing but the dry bones; and the gravedigger beetle, receiving his name from his curious habit, will speedily undermine the earth so as to give interment, for his own instinctive purposes, to dead creatures fifty or sixty times larger than himself. And so we might go on with scores upon scores of other illustrations of a like kind, including the fishes and reptiles, &c., of sea, river, and lake.

IV. Of many noisome insects, and the like—called noisome, that is to say, because they excite in us an instinctive aversion—it has been justly observed that so dependent, more or less, are all the series of animal and vegetable organisms upon one another, that, if the whole of any one kind were suddenly annihilated, it would be difficult to predicate where the effects of such destructive process would ultimately cease to be felt. Besides which, it has ever appeared to me to be, not only most unjustifiable in an intellectual point of view, but also morally presumptuous and intensely selfish, to base all our reasonings upon this subject, on the mere idea, or assumed fact, that all the rest of creation was contrived for no other than the one purpose of subserving the happiness, or, in this point of view, the mere shallow, and ignorant prejudices of man; who, on this wretched ground, might, and too often does, in a self-contradictory manner, proceed, not to preserve, but to destroy all around him; not for any asserted use, but for idle and inhuman amusement, thus acting, not as the dignified lord, but as the cruel and con-

temptible tyrant of those that are placed beneath him. But, on the contrary, we are bound to accept the fact, that, while all things tend, as a whole, to his comfortable existence, they, likewise, all tend to the comfortable existence of innumerable other beings, small as well as great; for who, on reviewing this magnificent theatre of animal life, teeming with an almost unspeakable multiplicity of forms, and breathing of an equally unspeakable amount of pleasure and enjoyment; from the quietly basking elephant, to the tiny buzzing fly frisking in the sunshine, and including the eagle, with her young, seated above the clouds, to the wren, with her exquisite nest in the lowly bush, along with myriads of others—not omitting those which only philosophers, with their microscopes, have been able to exhibit in millions upon millions within one drop of water—who can say that such is not the Will of their Sovereign Creator, or that He blesses not the man whose soul, thus partaking of the semblance of that Sovereign Source of love, can also partake of a similar love extended to all those living creatures? In opposition to such a savage notion, so often unscrupulously practised, though not so openly professed, the philosophic poet well sings—

“ He prayeth best, who loveth best
 All things both great and small;
 For the good God, who loveth us,
 He made and loveth all.”

And, certainly, the one virtue, without which all others are vain, is Charity.

V. As to the more terrible passions of mankind, to which we have just alluded, as being too often horrifying in their results, we have to recollect that they are evil, not of themselves; but only from their wickedness, crookedness, or misdirection, either through a fallible judgment, or a corrupt heart. Each feeling and passion was obviously created for use, and not for abuse, including even jealousy, anger, pride, and hatred, which need not, necessarily, be resolved into base suspicion, rage, haughtiness, nor malice: nor can we always declare, with certainty, that there is any one seeming evil, either of one kind or another, that may not be a mere means towards the attainment of ultimate and supreme good. The range of our reason, especially as regards the future, is but of limited extent as to details and particulars; so that we too often hail, as an immediate source of happiness, that which only proves to be good in the end, from its being a bitter, but wholesome correction of our judgment; and we just as often seek to flee from that which seems as a curse; but yet, to our amazement, turns out a blessing. We call such things accidents; but the word simply expresses our inability to unravel the complicated web-work of worldly events.


VI. But, we must go somewhat more deeply into this question; for some, indeed, reasoning upon the subject, have ventured even so far as to assert, that the existence of what they call, in an abstract manner, evil, is utterly inconsistent with the idea of an Infinite, and Omnipotent Beneficence, to whom, as they say, nothing could be impossible, and with whom, therefore, everything should

be purely and evidently good. But we must bear in mind that evil, in this abstract, or any other sense—except a moral one, of which more anon—is but a shifting comparative term, according to the mode in which it affects us, and not always positive; oftentimes being merely a deprivation, or negation, or even no more than a diminution or imperfection of good. What seems evil in the sight of one person, is not necessarily evil in the sight of all; very often quite the contrary; and what appears evil to-day is found, to-morrow, perhaps, to be but a part of the necessary means towards the attainment of the ultimate good, if not the very immediate root thereof. The rush of the tide cannot be expected to be suspended, in order to save one creature, while the welfare of millions depends upon its regularity; though that particular tide, to that particular individual, may, for the time being, seem to be, as it were, a positive and overwhelming evil. Neither can the fervent heat of the sun be intermitted for the sake of the fevered traveller, though such special degree of heat, to such special traveller, may, likewise, for the time being, appear to be an unmixed evil: For both such individuals must know that, not only are such things beneficial to the world at large, but that, hitherto, both of these present seeming evils, with thousands upon thousands of others, have been necessary parts of their own life-happiness. The Divine Ruler, having willed, or evolved, certain fundamental principles towards the attainment of the general or supreme well-being of His universe, must be consistent with His own unchangeable purposes of love and wisdom. He could not, in the nature of things,


or in consistency with his own necessary attributes, be perpetually modifying, more than he actually does by the principles of reaction, such laws to meet every capricious erring desire, or intellectual mistake of His individual creatures, who are, of course, more or less frail and imperfect; so as oftentimes to rush to their own hurt, or destruction, even as a moth rushes to the flame. In fact, absolute punishment, or pure suffering, devised for its own sake, or otherwise than as a means of warning or correction, and, therefore, of utility, as above indicated, is not to be admitted for one moment; simply because we have no proof of its existence any more than we have of the existence of absolute, or pure, cold, unmitigated, malice; and as to pain and partial destruction, every observer must admit, that they are necessary parts of the great plan for ultimate supreme good; being only other names for two of the sundry conditions of those sensations, and molecular changes, which are the prime constituents of organic life. The self-same machinery of sensation and nutrition, that arouses this sense of pain, or uneasiness, and causes partial destruction in the exercise of its functions, is the main source of all safety and pleasure. The very existence of the various means of self-help, and self-protection, proves the intent of this design; inasmuch as these involve the idea of an anticipation of such possible injury, and partial destruction; without which, these faculties would be of no use, as intelligent modifiers of the effects of bare physical laws, acting with blind force. Not that the existence of every single thing that we

view is to be referred exclusively to some particular use which may happen to affect our minds most, for that would be to impose our own mere notions upon nature, as if they were actual facts; but, here, we have the evidences of an entire consistent scheme; exhibiting illustrations of its inner purpose under innumerable forms, wherever we happen to direct our observation; and more particularly in those reactionary, or self-protective powers, existing within living beings. Such arrangement shows the deliberate balancing of one set of laws, or powers, against another, which is the leading feature throughout Creation; and this minute exercise of beneficence, by means of careful counteraction or correction; whether manifesting itself directly through those ordinary physical laws, or through the medium of vegetative life, or the minds of men, or animals, in their feelings towards themselves, their fellow-beings, their young, and others, affords the most convincing evidence of a supreme, moral government, recognisable by the moral sense, and the higher, or supersensuous reason, as clearly as our eyes see the light, or our bodies feel the ground.

VII. But we cannot expect that such government of an Omniscient Beneficence, ruling over an infinitely complicated universe of diverse beings, and powers, is to consist of an endless series of exceptional and special interferences against all petty accidents, as we humanly call them, or occasional slight losses of balance amongst the working forces of nature, if they be any real losses of balance at all, and not some preordained modifications of action for purposes beyond our ken. These working



forces, to our eyes, are opposite, or antithetic in their character, and the method of their self-rectifying processes consists of alternations of action and reaction, or counter-action; so that, while the general balance is maintained as a whole, there must be variations and fluctuations of a greater or lesser degree, from the mere relative positions of bodies; just as in the oscillations of the pendulum, in the fluctuating tides of the ocean, in the curious changes of the seasons and weather, and so on, to the more recondite deviations of our Earth, and the heavenly bodies from precise annual or orbital order, such as can rectify themselves only after the lapse of many cycles of ages, by a law of ever-recurring, or periodical compensation. This is well illustrated in the changing positions of our own planet, in its revolutions round the focus of its orbit, the calculation being that it can occupy the exactly same position on the line of the ellipse, only at intervals of twenty-five thousand years, or thereabout; and not by mere accident, in the common sense of the term, but, as above said, by the calculable operations of settled law, and in accordance with surrounding circumstances. It is evident, therefore, that no partial inconveniences, or apparent infliction of evil, here and there, could be permitted to stand in the way of the supreme plan for good; without the absurdity of inducing a still greater amount of these so-called evils. In short, the elements and Forces are not to be altered, in their essential nature, and general uniformity of action, because a few are injured, or perish by heat, or cold, or moisture, or drought, by the ordained corrective agencies of storm, tide, earthquake,



or by simple gravitation. Opposites thus exist everywhere in nature, and carry on their eternal action and counteraction in beautifully balanced oscillations for the evolution of the utmost possible good ; these opposites, in the last instance given, being the perpetual tendency of the planets to rush straight into space ; while the attractive power of their suns keeps them wheeling in circles more or less elliptic. But neither those grandly sweeping orbs of heaven, nor human passion, feeling, and activity, could co-exist with apathy, or utter repose. Worlds of organization and life could not fructify and increase without a perpetual commotion of their molecules ; the arrest of such commotion being simply death. The value of souls themselves, as we feel conscious, could not be tested to their own wholesome conviction without trials of some kind or other ; and even the absolute, or purely beautiful and good itself, could not be adequately appreciated, without the contrast of something of an opposite, or at least less perfect appearance ; any more than pure transparent light could properly impress us, without a similar contrast of black, or other opaque colour. Such facts, certainly, do indicate the existence of what we call impossibilities ; such as these reasoners assert ought to melt away before an Omnipotent Omniscience. But such reasoning is utterly perverted, and just as if one should say of a wise human counsellor that he was not essentially, or absolutely, of himself, wise ; because he could not capriciously alter his advice without committing folly. Such impossibilities are to be accepted, not as negations of Divine Power ; but as the positive expres-


sion of the fixed Will and Wisdom of God, as stamped by Him upon the nature of things, and declared in the laws of the physical and moral government of His Universe. They are impossibilities, in the same sense that two and two cannot, by any possibility, constitute any other number than four ; or, in like manner, as a four-sided figure can never be a circle ; nor a round figure a square ; though we, as men, might have named them oppositely had we so chosen. But such facts, being utter or absolute certitudes of the intellectual consciousness, their contraries are utter or absolute impossibilities. It is not therefore, to be inferred, from such facts, that God lacks omnipotence ; but that such omnipotence is inspired by an Omniscient Wisdom, which Omniscient Wisdom not only wills to be, but absolutely must be, consistent with itself, its attributes, and inherent laws, reasons, or ideas of which such impossibilities are an essential and necessary expression ; inasmuch as, if all things were thus possible in their sense of the term, their could be no really established law at all, which is the chief proof of a God. But the eternal fixedness of that Supreme Will of Truth, and Sovereign Judgment, is unalterable forever. Such, things, therefore, have been, are, and ever shall be ; because He is the I AM, or Eternal Spiritual Presence, “*without variableness, or shadow of turning ;*” whose primordial laws, of whatsoever kind they be, can only be expressed by us as ultimate facts, whether simply axiomatic, like the above, or deduced by long processes of reasoning ; facts beyond which the human mind cannot go ; except to have a cognition of

their spiritual nature and origin, and to abide, with faith and confidence in them, and in the Being of their Author, of whose nature it feels itself to be a direct recipient, while, with this cognition of such eternal necessary principles, it is able to explore the endless intricacies of creation, and to reach, by their aid, the one unfathomable Source of all moral and intellectual design and purpose. For, even as the vital principle of a seed, unconsciously knows, so to speak, and seizes upon the appropriate elements of its development proceeding from soil, sun, and air; so the human mind, consciously penetrates beneath, and ascends above the crust of material nature, to attach itself and its thoughts, after unravelling one mystery within another and another, to that Spiritual Power which is congenerous with that self, and which alone, by its laws of reason, puts all the rest into moving order, or makes it of any meaning or real significance; created nature being accepted by it as a product of mind submitted to the attention of mind, and commanding but one response from the rational consciousness and moral sense.

VIII. Even as regards moral evil, the existence of which is indubitably proved to us by internal evidence, it is inconceivable that its entire absence could be possible where there is, as in mankind, under their present state, an individuality of consciousness and will, specially attached to a body dependent for its subsistence and comfort upon numerous necessary conditions, to be provided for from without, and in so great a measure, by its own free exertions. The very basis of self-regard, be it of a

higher or lower kind, which is inseparable from the nature of its constitution, combined, as that constitution is, with imperfect powers of discernment, compels some divergence from strictly moral and beneficent motive, or principle, and leads, through the clashing of individual desires, both to the feeling and doing, of a more or less amount of evil towards other fellow-beings, and which could not be avoided ; except by a change of those conditions which are at present absolutely necessary to our existence. It could be effected only by the substitution of a spiritual body, such as Paul speaks of, accompanied with a corresponding mind, free from all fleshly cares and necessities, and endowed with immortality and superior wisdom and purity. But it has been asked by certain doubting, though not unworthy minds, who have got entangled amongst these intricacies regarding good and evil, and the possible and impossible in relation to God and His government, why, at least, He should not interpose to prevent the commission of such flagrant crimes as murder, and the like, whether practised by individual against individual ; or by thousands against thousands, as in war. But, if the preceding arguments have induced a conviction as to the existence of an Omnipotent, and Omniscient Moral Ruler of the Universe ; then, standing upon this deduction, how very evident does it become that, just as He has impressed upon man an infinitely reduced image, or semblance of His own moral and intellectual nature, as regards a moral source of causation, so has He chosen to impress upon him a like infinitely reduced image, or semblance of His own

absolute independence under the form of a consciousness of free-will, to interpose between which and the accomplishment of its more guilty purposes, would quite nullify the hazardous, but glorious gift ; and, therefore, in simple consistency with this principle and purpose, He has left all free to complete such crimes ; not that He may convict them for His own sake or satisfaction—since He knows all already ; but, for final purposes of not only making justice known in the abstract, but also felt and demonstrated amongst men, as finite, and imperfect, yet naturally proud and self-sufficient spirits, He leaves them to convict themselves, and that for their own ultimate advantage, and moral contentment, in the more complete satisfaction of that judging conscience which He has placed within them, to which they certainly feel themselves responsible, and before which they all bow, even although they may so often forget or stifle its dictates. At the same time, there are also sentiments within us, obviously designed to counteract these aberrations of mere selfishness, and to guide us in a righteous, even though far from right, consideration of the interests of others ; not merely in a spirit of bare justice ; but of kindly sympathy, generosity, and love ; nay, more, of self-sacrifice for the sake of children, relations, friends, and country, quite irrespective of any particular form of religious faith. These thoughts and feelings, again, not being enkindled by ourselves, but bestowed upon us, lead the mind to the contemplation of that higher Source from which such tendency to unselfish beneficence is derived, and make it cling to such Power for support amidst all the difficulties and temptations



which beset it in its passage through this life. The same Supreme Power has further provided, as just said, a special director of the will in the shape of conscience, which, in its lofty calmness, is something quite different from the warmer counteracting sentiments above spoken of; a something upon which we are made to rely with dispassionate confidence and certainty; as a sort of touchstone for the testing of all moral good or evil within ourselves, and which affords the most striking and convincing evidence of a Moral Arbiter over the Universe, who hath, in this wise, leavened us with a faculty, quite apart from, and above, all the appetites, desires, passions, and sentiments which belong to man, and the animals in common, and who, by this sublime attribute of conscientiousness, or innate sense of duty, has sundered the human mind from all the ordinary laws, not only of Physics, but of Physiology, each as operating only within limited space and time upon the more immediate matters of common life, and placed it in a boundless sphere of moral and spiritual interests, quite beyond all considerations of merely material or temporal welfare, and where its only function is, under the guidance of this faculty, to make everything as conformable as possible to those purposes of Divine Love which it was clearly intended to subserve; as evidenced by its own internal instinct of purely disinterested, and calm motive, qualified and animated by charity, or duty alone, even towards those who may be our declared, active, and uncompromising enemies.


IX. And, indeed, the reasonable faith and confidence

in the principle of a great moral scheme governing the universe, from which such feeling of conscientiousness springs, and which is begotten in the depths of our mental consciousness, and rooted in the Supreme Source of all created being, is more especially strengthened by a consideration of that calm sense of justice and of a beneficent economy of moral government which, amidst all the wickedness and injustice which everywhere abounds, characterises human nature practically and even as it now is, and which, as above observed, being a quality derived only from some higher power, must have been implanted by that same Being for purposes of general good, and who, we therefore infer, possesses this, as well as all other benign moral attributes in that fulness of perfection which we call the Divine Love or Absolute Goodness. And, although it might be quite consistent with a supreme will and power, that certain individuals should be loaded with worldly benefits without any discoverable merit; whilst others shall be doomed to suffer lives of continuous unhappiness, or even of positive pain; without any discoverable, or adequate demerit on their part, as compared with what we see in the others; yea, quite the contrary to our minds; and, although such benefits and sufferings, as already observed, might be supposed to be balanced by other considerations of a supreme general utility invisible to our mortal eyes, and inappreciable by our limited understandings; yet as this is not brought home to us as an all-ruling principle within a life-time, or even in the whole experience of history; however numerous may be the individual instances of a

far distant retribution from time to time, we cannot, by any effort, dismiss from our minds the conviction of a certain reserved compensation for such apparently undeserved miseries after the period of our physical dissolution; otherwise, there might appear to be some just ground for the dramatic exclamation, uttered in a state of wretchedness, not unmingled with impiety—

“The innocent dust, contents it to be dust;
Why was it fashioned thus—to live and suffer?”


But this conviction of the eternal exercise of a divine justice towards all such as have been gifted with a moral appreciation of it, leads directly to the next inference, that rational souls must, to that end, be immortal, and that He who created such souls, and imbued them in with a certain leaven of His own love and wisdom, and gave them a sense of beauty, a sense of sublimity and grandeur, a sense of justice and duty, a sense of goodness and truth, a love of knowledge, and a perception of eternity, immensity, and infinite intellectuality, will, undoubtedly, bring all such gifts to their fullest fruition in His own time, and not suffer them to perish, or to be cut off, without fulfilling to the utmost the purpose of their creation. We know that the human faculties grasp the idea of an Infinity, which must contain all other ideas and things, and that they, therefore, feeling themselves immersed in an Eternity, stretch their tentative speculations within the boundless abyss, towards a limitless past and future, thirsting for a deeper, higher, and wider knowledge of objects, and longing after fresh ideal realms



of beauty, and goodness, and wisdom from which they are debarred, only by the physical conditions under which they are placed on this globe. The mind thus feels conscious of possessing a potentiality for future excellence far beyond that which is now within its reach ;—a latent germ of divinity, as it were, is found to be enfolded within its present being, capable, under sundry conceivable circumstances, of an unlimited degree of expansion ; and while, therefore, there does exist a conviction of the love, wisdom, and consequent justice of the Supreme Being, and a belief, founded on such conviction, that nothing could, by Him, be created capriciously, or in vain ; there must accrue the further conviction, that such a soul as that of man could never have been intended to be bounded by a brief span of years in this life ; but that it is destined to attain, in some future state, those loftier desires, and purposes, the fulfilment of which is denied to it here ; and so, again and again, by a forever rising progression, to ascend from sphere to sphere of greater and yet greater moral and intellectual glory ; though still incapable, even by such eternal advancement, of ever compassing that height beyond height, and depth beyond depth, which is the incomprehensible abode of the Lord of the Absolute Infinitude, and “King of Eternity.”

X. This, it may be rebutted, by those whose hostility has been anticipated, is a mere matter of faith. Yes ! but it is a rational faith. It may be said again : What is a rational faith ? Faith is belief, either from a sense of probability amounting to conviction, or from a mere wish or fond hope ; and, certainly may be irrational, as

well as rational. But a rational faith consists in this: that we believe that that which is as yet unknown, will be found to be consistent with that which is now really and thoroughly known. And to descend from such spiritual matters, to those of a physical kind—yet without compromising the idea already urged that the physical is in its essence merely a subordinate outgrowth of the metaphysical—we find this rational faith beautifully illustrated by the tenacious belief of Newton, that both the diamond, and water, as refracting bodies, contained each an inflammable substance; though not, till long after his death, did Lavoisier, and Cavendish demonstrate, the first named that the diamond was but a wonderful, and inimitable form of charcoal, and both of them that water had, for one of its two constituents, the highly inflammable hydrogen; Cavendish synthetically, and Lavoisier analytically. In this case, as in many sound ancient theories, the belief, or faith in principle and fact, was so far, that is to say, really and practically, equivalent to the demonstration which only consisted in a further knowledge of particulars, though, certainly, these particulars were very valuable, as affording additional confirmation of the principle; the later inquirers in the last case having plodded into those precise tracks where Newton had already left the foot-marks of his leap—a leap accomplished by means of faith in his reason, and a just recognition of the general analogies of Nature. By a like recognition of those analogies, perceiving that the whole mental constitution and history of man, with his secret, and unrequited thoughts and deeds of good and evil, and



self-judgment by conscience, prove him to have a sense of responsibility in Eternity and to his Creator, much more than in this life and to his fellow men, the inference as to a judgment after death is perfectly just, quite consistent with existing facts, and principles, and in the highest degree probable; independently of its being a natural, or rather inspired matter of faith or mental instinct, which, however, from its universality, is, of itself, a very weighty subjective evidence on this side of the question; since nothing, as has been already said, is ever found to have been made in vain, or without reference to certain ulterior objects; and no other ulterior object could be assigned to the conscience, and this sense of future responsibility, besides their applicability to some future existence; unless all be declared to be mere matter of chance, or, as some have suggested, the feeling be a mere vain error inseparable from the human mind, and that God implanted it as a special faculty for self-deception, purposely to check moral wickedness in this world, by means of a false scent. But this, as applied to the Divine Being, in which sense alone it can be thus used, is not only simple blasphemy, but a gross contradiction of ideas; as implying that the God of Truth is a Spirit of falsehood; and absurdly imputing to an Omnipotent and Omniscient Being shifts and petty arts of trickery, such as are inconsistent with power and wisdom, and characteristic only of weakness and guile. If such effectual prevention of moral evil, by such a Supreme Power, had really been the intent; then either there would have been no motive for evil, or it would have been ordained,

without leaving matters to so uncertain a check, that the violation of the moral law would have been inevitably followed by its appointed punishment. But, while this is the fact as regards the violation of physical laws, how little it reigns in the moral world, we, all of us, too well do know: so pointing to a reserved rectification of accounts, in perfect consistency with that sense of free-will with which we have been endowed, and of which we have already spoken, as being, without such liberty of action, a mere nullity. The necessitarians have said, in effect, that as man did not create his own nature, nor the internal, nor external circumstances by which that nature is moulded and moved; so he can have no real free-will, or liberty, nor, consequently, any responsibility. But this is only to assert that he does not possess that absolute freedom which is impossible to any creature, and only possible with God. Yet the sense of freedom of choice cannot be banished from the mind, nor, consequently, the sense of responsibility; and so man continues to view himself as a free and responsible agent, in spite of the most specious arguments to the contrary; the very advocates of the Doctrine of Necessity, themselves, acting practically against it, and, like other people, holding all their neighbours as being free and responsible for their motives and deeds, whenever they happen to offend them. So, when the servant of the old Greek philosopher, having defrauded his master, put forth as a justification the master's own doctrine that all arose from Necessity or Fate; that master, with an exquisite and cool humour, punished that servant under the self-same plea of Necessity.

sity or Fate ; and so it is, and shall be throughout all time ; for practice is the surest proof of a real conviction ; and all the rest is a dreamy affectation of singularity. A man may thus affect to think or reason as if he and others had no free-will ; but always acts as if he and those others had it ; because he knows from within himself that he has at least liberty of choice, and cannot believe that his fellow-men can differ from him in any such essentiality of character. Indeed but for this fundamental conviction as to a God, and human freedom, and a future responsibility, conscience could have no place in the reasonings of this world, and the only question to be solved, as a criterion of success in life, would be how much could be the utmost that any man could appropriate for his own benefit with safety to himself, and without any regard to the interests of others. The existence of a conscience, therefore, implies the prior conviction of the existence of a God, and responsibility to His authority in Eternity ; both ideas, as already observed, being coeval with the first dawns of real thought, or serious reflection. It is essentially a quality appertaining to a condition of spiritual trial, having reference to some future results, and could have no place or use, either in a region of utterly hopeless despair, or of such moral perfection as should admit of no sense of temptation, nor, consequently, any need of self-denial. By its presence, in this world, therefore, and its special abode within the human mind, it points to that future of Being, without which it would be a simple delusion, tending to the benefit only of the wicked and

unprincipled, and to the injury of the good and virtuous ; and that, not as a temporary, as we believe it now to be, but as a final, result. Such an unwarrantable supposition has been already disposed of ; though it may be further added that the conscience, exhibiting itself as a law in this present life, a law which is carried into effect by a positive, and deliberate determination of will and intention on the part of the conscious and rational intellect, and not through mere ebullitions, or spurts of feeling, or random, inconsistent, and blind promptings, or rather happenings of mere so-called chance, its existence must be referred to a mental Law-giver, whose purposes could not be expected by any rational mind to be inconsistent with reason ; though often necessarily inscrutable, from being quite beyond the reach of such investigation as is required for the exercise of reason by the human mind. In short, there are mysteries in the moral, as well as in the physical, world, which baffle all solution for the present ; but do not, on that account, lead us to suppose that there is no satisfactory solution for them ; because we always find that the more we clear up, the more satisfactory everything becomes, whether in a physical or moral point of view—

“ A little light, and all confusion seems ;
But Truth stands out distinct, in Day’s meridian beams.”

And although, as creatures, we cannot presume to arrogate to ourselves any absolute right to reward, any more than we can insist upon punishment to others ; yet, the mind being imbued with an inherent desire for

future progression, as well as with a fear of regression, or annihilation, we cannot, consistently with our convictions of the Divine Love, believe such feelings to have been implanted in vain, or without some real end, or purpose of fulfilment. Even as a reflecting female friend has well and naturally observed upon this subject:—"I often think, when I cannot see or understand things either with my outer, or inner sight, that God has not given me this inquiring mind to leave it unsatisfied; and I do anticipate great happiness in a future state, from being then able to see and understand all things more clearly than I can at present."


D. N.

PART FIFTH.

OF THE IDEA CONCERNING GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES IN RELATION TO THE PRESENT SCHEME OF THINGS ON EARTH.

I. To realise the position of man, in relation to the actual condition of the Earth as his present local habitation, in a more complete manner, we must next carry ourselves back to those remoter geological periods, when it was being prepared for his dwelling-place. Firstly, we grasp at the evidence afforded to us by the deeper unstratified rocks, as well as by the present regular increase of temperature as we descend lower and lower, that our globe, after condensation, perhaps, from a previous state of vapour or gas, had once been a molten mass, formless, and void of life. Next, after it had cooled on the surface, and not only the fluids, but also the steaming vapours, had become condensed; we have proofs of a muddy or marshy condition in certain parts, from the remains of aquatic plants and animals being alone found in particular strata, such as many of the coal beds, &c., these being, obviously, in sundry cases, depositions from liquid expanses. Then, we find proofs of the distinct

separation of land and water ; by discovering at one point, the remains of land animals and plants, and, at another, similar remains of water animals and plants. Meanwhile, as the action of the atmosphere, and the incessant wearing and tearing influences of rains and winds, &c., wore away the higher lands, and lodged their waste in valleys, or in the beds of seas and lakes ; one heap upon the top of another ; a different sort of force, or explosive power, was also, from time to time, now in one place, and again, in another, heaving up these deposited beds, and propelling the molten matter from beneath through their rents ; so as to form those stupendous ridges and peaks of primitive rock which constitute the greatest mountains and volcanoes, and the eruptive energy of which has dislocated the more recent stratified rocks, &c., in all manner of directions. Tracing, from below upwards, within that limited portion of the Earth-crust which has been revealed to our knowledge — for unless these upheavals had taken place we could not, at least as yet, if ever, have come to any acquaintance with the lower depths—we find no vestige of any organized form in the plutonic or fire rocks ; and in the deepest beds of the stratified or water rocks, we find only the smallest, and most primitive species of cryptogamic and microscopic plants, and animalcules ; mere spherules of organized matter, such as were without even the minutest mouth, or opening, for the admission of nutriment, or the extrusion of waste ; but living only by a due balance between an endosmotic, and exosmotic or double capillary action of fluids through the simple globular membrane of which



they consisted. In many of these growths, the vegetable and the animal remains are scarcely to be distinguished from one another: except, perhaps, by chemical tests; yet, so numerous must they have been, that they are found deposited in billions upon billions, so as to have formed solid rock of ten or twelve thousand feet in thickness, every particle of chalk, or its congenerous formations being traceable to an animal origin where so situated in such beds. Gradually, as we ascend, we discover an exaltation of the types of life; until we reach beds, wherein are deposited the remains of gigantic fishes, lizards, and fish-lizards, &c.; and then the mastodons, and various other huge quadrupeds, each coupled with a corresponding vegetation, far superior in size to the existing orders; and yet inferior in nicety, and complexity of organization; and so on, with many series of changes, until we reach man himself, who is the latest upon the surface, along with those vegetable and animal creations, with which he is associated.

II. And yet, not for all this, are we to accept the doctrine of exaltation by simple appetite or self-adaptation to fortuitous circumstances, as advocated by certain theorists, and by whom it is asserted that all these gradations of being have resulted only from the changing of one form of organization into another, under the mere influence of altered outward conditions; so that a creature might change from a fish to a reptile, bird, or quadruped, simply by making continuous exertions of a given kind, under the force of circumstances, through many series of generations. For, however apparently possible, or even,

as I shall fairly allow, plausible, such a supposition may seem in an abstract point of view or *prima facie*, especially when the forms of organization might be nearly enough allied to each other: and although, as already observed, it could not invalidate, in the slightest degree, the doctrine of a primal intelligent cause, any more than that is invalidated by the present reproductive powers of organized beings, even so infinitely expansible as they seem to be, seeing that the life and its conditions are still to be accounted for; suffice it to say, as matter of fact, that there is no proof whatever of such occurrences; all species, however nearly allied, being well defined from each other; and no such fancied transitional creatures having ever been found, either in a living or fossil state. No doubt, volumes of partial fact have been published, in which detail is heaped upon detail, containing curious relations as to the strange modifications of animal and vegetable structure under a variety of circumstances, so as almost to overwhelm the ordinary reader, and make him believe it probable that some general induction of the truth was being arrived at through such facts; but the whole effort, however admirable in other respects, proves itself to be a failure, so far as such induction is concerned. All that is wanted for the purpose is one decisive fact, but that one fact has not yet been produced; and, therefore, no inference can be said to exist, however bold may be any of the assertions put forth on the subject. On the other hand, there are many positive proofs to the contrary. For, although external circumstances may modify, to a certain degree, many living

beings, so that they can accommodate themselves, as it were, to such circumstances; yet such degree of accommodation or flexibility is limited; and, so far from their being able to go beyond such limit, they are doomed rather to perish than to pass it. It is also known that, although the embryonic forms of all creatures very much resemble one another, to our eyes, at certain very early stages, being, often, really undistinguishable; and, although they have each of them to pass through a greater or lesser number of organic changes before arriving at maturity; and, even then, being all composed of ultimate molecules not easily, if at all, discriminated from each other by us; yet it is also known that, at each stage of such progress, they still ever retain that specially distinguishing idea, or impressed principle, their very essence, indeed, which has made them, and keeps them, what they are, and what, therefore, in their respective marks of identity, they were manifestly intended to be, and to continue; unless perishing altogether. We cannot, by any change of circumstances, compel the embryo of one being to change its appointed courses and develop itself into another; nor, by arresting the development, can we keep the higher being under any lower form of organization. An acorn, if it fructify at all, must fructify into an oak-tree; and the primary germ of lion, horse, or man, must grow into lion, horse, or man, or nothing at all. By no length of perseverance has the breed of the ass ever been turned into that of the horse; or the breed of the domestic cat into that of the wild cat, so called, or ounce, or ocelot; far less

of the jaguar, or Bengal tiger, or Asiatic or Caffrarian lion ; not even has a dromedary been turned into a camel, a wolf into a fox or dog, or a mouse into a rat ; far less, though some of these theorists *will* have it so, an ape into a man ; between even the youngest specimen of which latter, and the oldest and best-bred ape, there exists such a difference of faculty, not merely in degree, but in kind, as to constitute what has been aptly called a gulph utterly impassable. To say that such things as these asserted metamorphoses cannot be proved to be utterly impossible, is simply begging or evading the question, and the acknowledgment of such a pernicious principle in argument would open a door for the admission of every freak of fancy, in opposition to reason, and to plain and actual observation of fact. It is for those who make a positive assertion to prove its positive truth, and not to call upon others, who will not accept it without such proof, to prove the impossibility of the negative. But, to close and clinch the argument, Nature herself has quite stultified such a supposition by one overwhelming and irresistible fact, capable of being demonstrated over and over again during the life-time of individual men, and, much more so, within that of the race ; namely, that, though we may have succeeded in producing mules from such closely kindred creatures as the horse and the ass, the lion and tiger, and the dog and the fox or wolf, &c., &c., yet these, as by special interposition, and as if to afford proof of such special care, by first allowing, and next limiting, the transgression, it is made to stop ; for she has doomed all such productions to sterility, and

has, thereby, emphatically declared that this doctrine of appetite, and the assimilation of species, or the mere gradual blending, or, shall we say blundering, of one form of organization into another, even under the most feasible circumstances, is none of hers; because quite at variance with her observed constant practice. The latitude which she does allow for accommodation to circumstances, is witnessed in the wonderful, and, indeed, almost opposite, varieties of such species as men, oxen, dogs, and fowls, &c., &c.; but, at the same time, we see the limit of such latitude by the local perishing, or utter disappearance of whole orders of creatures, under the deprivation of some condition subsidiarily necessary to their existence; as well as in this invariable law as to the barrenness of cross breeds of separate species, and the fertility of members of all species, however apparently unlike as varieties or individuals. Nor is it superfluous to speak, once more, of the simple absence of all proof of any such universal metamorphic law, as what this self-developmental and metamorphic theory supposes; and which, again, as if by special answer to the argument, is shown to operate partially in the case of bees, butterflies, frogs, &c., &c., in their astonishing examples of transformation; even to the extent of changing a drone into a queen bee, merely by removing the germ out of its own into a queen cell, so exhibiting the process, as *one* of the infinity of methods employed by nature; but not the *only* one as they would have it. Indeed, as already observed, we now have, throughout animated nature, just that amount of general correspondence, and simplicity, or

what we may call uniformity of principle, which ought, distinctively, to mark the operations of an Omniscient and therefore thoroughly self-consistent Being ; and yet, along with such uniformity of principle, we also have that infinitude of variety, or startling profusion of modification as to form, size, colour, and proportion, which ought, likewise, to be expected from such a boundless prolific source of creativeness ; being one in Essence ; but endlessly manifold and multiform in the manifestation of its eternal and Omnipotent activity. Had there been nothing else but round after round of a dull and utter iteration and reiteration of sameness, the human intelligence, supposing it could exist under such a condition of affairs, might have pronounced all to have arisen from some strange mechanical spring-work ; or, had there been an unceasing production of novelties, under principles fleeting away as they came, it might, equally, have referred all, if not to mechanism, at all events, to nothing more than some protean spirit of playful caprice ; but here, we have the most indubitable evidence of the foundation of all things upon mind, with its demonstrable and characteristic code of purposed laws of reason, so acting and reacting, one upon each other, and all on all, as in a regular system, that the application thereof is productive of results, which are infinitely numerous, and, at the same time, also infinitely consistent, even in apparent antagonism. But, at all events, as this matter of change of species is a question that can be practically, and ultimately, decided by time alone, according to their own showing, we may reasonably hope, now that civilization promises to be, ere long, almost universal,

and man has obtained such mastery over the essentially unchanging sea, that he shall, as a being of cultivated intellect and power of locomotion, survive all such progressive changes in geographical surface, and organic form, and finally, attain a knowledge of the reality by actual experience; only unless any catastrophe should, meanwhile, occur; such as might involve the whole race in one common ruin; before it had succeeded in thus exalting itself into some of those supposed higher types of being: and I use the word *supposed*, simply because there is actually no proof of any such events having ever occurred; though, according to this theory of an universal gradual progression, no others should ever have taken place; nor any sudden catastrophe been at all possible; which, however, is in direct contradiction to the constantly repeated facts of earthquakes, and inundations, &c., and all the consequences thereof, as laid open to us on a gigantic scale by practical geology. When they rebut, by averring that these gradual changes can occur only in the course of periods that quite transcend all human experience, they are simply asking us to accept their fancies for facts; facts such as can be demonstrated by experience alone; as distinguished from those fundamental facts, or real axioms of metaphysical, inclusive of mathematical, truth, which are innately rooted in mind, which are acknowledged by every sane individual as soon as stated, and the abstract certitude of which no experience, nor inexperience, can modify, strengthen, or impair. Of this, perhaps, enough; but so much was required to be said in regard to this mooted doctrine of the blending of

species, and organic appetite towards upward self-development; not as a limited individual improvement, by exercise and education; but as an essential change in the nature of the being, or, in other and plainer words, the creation, or production of fresh orders of life by circumstances of chance and time, through the casual and passive operation of secondary causes, or mere physical forces and laws of themselves, and not by any pre-ordained purpose. But, in fact, and on the contrary, it is by this presiding principle of the separate identity, or individuality, of the life of species, that the original, internal, and governing idea, or real essence of every distinctive organization is carried out; so that the proto-plant, or primitive vital germ of the mustard seed, for instance, proceeds to fabricate a mustard-plant and nothing else; and, so with every other seed, after its kind, be it that of a thistle, or of grass, or of an elder tree, or of mahogany, or of the cedar; though all growing in the same ground, fed by the same air and water, and under the same sun. A plastic governing force, or skilfully ordered assimilative and elective affinity, is made to be inherent, hereditarily, in each one of those germinal molecules or atoms, which impressed force, as one of moral and intellectual causation, propagating its influence through all the intermediate physical operations, continues to control, for specific ends. every future atom that shall enter the respective organizations; transmuting such foreign, but adopted atoms, to their own nature, and not only so, but guiding them to their appropriate places within the complicated individual system, under such numerous different forms, according as

each may be required in this, or that solid, or soft tissue, or this or that peculiar secretion, for life, for growth, or for reproduction in each separate species. Such complicated, and obviously purposed processes, surely, can never be attributed to the primary action of any material molecules ; but only to some principle of order regulating their movements, and which, as such, can be referred only to an Intelligent Will.

III. Those thinkers who profess to square all their opinions by existent natural action alone, or plain, positive, and present fact, as the all in all of every question, or, at least, as the only legitimate object of human inquiry, and yet adventure, so incongruously, to speculate thus freely concerning matters so very remote, are wont to object that any direct act of creation would be what they call a miracle, and, therefore, inconsistent with the usual courses of events as now witnessed by us in this epoch, which is alone under our actual cognizance. But they seem to forget that the power of reproduction, and such a continuous progressive self-development as they advocate, are just as much miracles, or objects of wonder and mystery, as any fresh creation, effected directly under our ken, could be ; only that unreflecting minds become accustomed to the processes daily occurring before their eyes, and, therefore, indifferent to them. Whether the first proto-plasts were mere germs, or perfect beings, is quite immaterial to the great question now under consideration ; though the advocates of a gradual development seem to think that their theory bridges a difficulty for creation, by means of a sort of sliding scale, which it certainly does

not, but only throws the question back by another stage, or other stages. To enter upon the subject would only be to revive the ancient contradictory arguments of the sophists as to whether the egg or the bird, the acorn or the oak, the sperm and spawn, or fish, or frog, &c., &c., were the first originated, without the possibility of settling anything as a natural fact; though, to all experience and reason, and putting the practical insolubility of the problem to one side for a moment, as well as those revealed declarations which would be quite out of place in this naked argument addressed to the human judgment alone, it would appear far more likely that all animals, including man, were first created by rapid strides of growth towards perfection, than that they were left as embryonic germs to slowly attain such perfection under all the adverse influences of the surrounding elements; a process, indeed, which seems to us quite impossible, and most especially in those classes of animals that have to undergo gestation and lactation; except by tediously multiplying miracle upon miracle, instead of accepting one only as complete and all-sufficient in itself. Though we see an infinitely greater complexity in the object, we do not see any utter impossibility in the supposed process of a full-grown creature being developed rapidly; even as the twigs, leaves, and flowers of a plant are unfolded from out the tiny bud. Far less would we wonder were even a man found to have been evolved through certain brief intermediate stages—even as he actually now is within the womb—after the manner of a frog from its spawn and tadpole condition; without any necessity of passing out of

one species into another, seeing that species are kept so separate from each other. But it is the first imparting of life, however humble, and much more so when of the highest order, by whatsoever process, that is the great mystery in this matter. A beginning of created things there must have been; and such beginning, being to us inconceivable as to the method or methods of the operation, though a perfect certitude in point of abstract fact, we call it miraculous, as an object of wonder and a mystery, and beyond all explanation on our part, as being ourselves merely passive recipients of the life that is in us. The inductive search into the stages of any subsequent progressive growth or development, however important and interesting, merely multiplies our knowledge of the intermediate powers of causation, and reveals to us more and more of the links of the chain, which is still, however, in its integrity, as immeasurable to us as ever. It is the first permeation of definite form, orderly motion, and lower or higher life into matter, as just said, that constitutes the dark and impenetrable, yet not insurmountable, gulph in all such inquiries, the words dark and impenetrable being as applicable to the lowest germ as to the highest organism. Impenetrable, because we cannot discern the deeply shrouded process; yet not insurmountable, because, with the eye of the super-sensuous reason, instinct with its own sources of power, we can gaze over and beyond those barriers of matter which block the bodily eye, and apprehend, by moral affinity, that Eternal Fount of Spiritual Origination on which alone, in a world of order and purpose, it can

finally rest, and without which, itself, as a derived faculty, could never possibly have existed. For, as we feel assured, and do know, as a certitude of the reason, that no one thing can emanate from any source not already possessing the elements of its being in their essentiality; and as we are, therefore, convinced that life can only proceed from the fulness of life, sentiment from the fulness of sentiment, and intellect from the fulness of intellectuality; so, by this axiom, the reason is enabled to surmount, or ascend through the gloom enveloping so-called ultimate facts, and to recognize the Divine Power operating within, and beyond it, though we know not its direct method of imposing those principles upon matter; nor, even what necessary connection exists between innumerable causes and effects in experimental science; excepting as matter of constantly associated fact; though certainly, sometimes, as in gravitation, &c., as universal fact, confirmed by the result of all experience in all known time and place, and from its result in universal utility, proving its origin from design. Therefore, it is sufficient for us, as we now are, that we never behold any comprehensible effects without some adequate causes, along with a link of reason binding the two together; and so, when we meet with effects that are incomprehensible, yet perfectly true as certitudes of the consciousness, we are compelled, in compliance with the laws of reason and consistency, to infer the existence of a preceding cause, along with a like link of reason, which, though equally incomprehensible, is likewise equally true, as a certitude of the intellect. And, for illustration of

this process, as a plain matter of fact, though involved in inscrutable mystery, we are not required to grope backwards into periods of time beyond the range of all personal experience, as in geology, though that is an experience of reason, for we daily, and thousands and thousands of times over, witness, not only the formation of endless and exquisite beauties in crystallization, &c.; but also the entrance of millions of inanimate atoms into the living organism, there to be converted into living particles, in accordance with those that they meet there, which must, in their turn, die, and all this without our being able to grasp, with the eye, or any other physical means, that precise and special modification of the molecular arrangement in which the life and death physically consist; far less the vital essence, or invisible energy, which governs these physical actions and reactions, in so exact and invariable a manner; but which is none the less recognized by the reasoning mind, and referred by it, through whatever number of unknown intermediate causes, to that one Ultimate Intellectual Cause, to which it feels itself to be more immediately allied, by its perception of those laws of orderly sequence, and mutual adaptation, based on mathematical, and metaphysical truths, by which such infinite multitudes of particles under such numerous processes, are built up into the more complex manifestations of individual being, however minute and infinitesimal, and, as if in exemplification of which, the Great Intellectual Life-spring of all design forever moves, and, thereby, manifests His existence to others who possess any faculty for cognition of Him as a

kindred Essence, however unspeakably beyond all reach of thought in the integrity of His Being. The impatient, and the unreasonable, have not hesitated to say that they cannot trust to reason in such a question; but would require some visible token, or audible voice, or other such form of sensible miracle for their complete satisfaction; but, putting aside the peculiar liability to gross error in relation to such unnatural phenomena, no miracle, in the special sense of the term, as meaning a deviation from law, is required to verify such a deduction; even as, in its ordinary sense, of the operation of law begetting a sentiment of wonder within us, we are all miracles in ourselves, and surrounded by hosts of miracles on every side, the totality being the one abiding miracle, involving millions of others, a visible and a sensible revelation, and an audible speech indeed, not in the vulgar acceptance expressed in the demand, of some vernacular, and perhaps, most uncouth language of human contrivance; but written in characters of universal significance, and needing no key for their interpretation, beyond that inborn power of reason which was intended to unlock the meaning of such problematical, but not utterly mysterious, words. Even as the poet, Cowley, so well and wisely sings of the vegetable creation; yet not merely as a singer; but as a seer and thinker—

“ Where does the wisdom, and the Power Divine
 In a more bright and sweet reflection shine?
 Where do we finer stroakes and colours see,
 Of the Creator's real Poetry,
 Than when we, with attention look,
 Upon the third day's volume of THE BOOK ?

If we could open, and intend the eye,
 We, all of us, like Moses, should espy,
 Even in *each* bush, the radiant Deity."

All this plastic and metamorphic power within living tissues, dominating over elements only chemically analagous to their own composition, is, both in extent and degree, truly marvellous; and, but for its being thus exercised before our eyes, every hour of our lives, and to an infinitely greater extent and degree in the sight of chemical and physiological philosophers, we might well doubt its possibility. But here, and on every side, stand the facts, and we must, of necessity, draw the inference from them, as above stated.

IV. But, to resume the geological question, in the midst of which the above interpolation seemed to be required, in regard to these speculations concerning the modes of creation, we find evidence, as already said, that, during these ancient days, ages, or periods above spoken of, many convulsions or revolutions, both of a gradual and sudden character, took place; such as the slow or sudden upheaval of the beds of seas, the like slow or sudden depression, or other displacement of the solid land; and also changes in the temperature of different portions of the earth's surface. By such means, the bottoms of ancient lakes, seas, and oceans, became, in time, the nursing mothers of land plants and animals; whilst those islands or continents that had nurtured former generations became worn down, or sunken, so as to be overwhelmed by the waters; only, however, to be again heaved up in due time, and thus display, to the astonished civilized

man of these more recent periods, the long-hidden graves of innumerable strange forms that had long since ceased to exist. By such convulsions, revolutions, or changes of one kind or another, came the mighty mountain ridges, up-rearing their cloud-capped tops and icy pinnacles above the plains; by these came the shady vales, the rifted water-courses of the rivers, and the rocky ramparts that abut upon the ocean, and guard the dry land from its assaults. By these came Chimbarazo, Sorata, Mont Blanc, Vesuvius, Etna, the gigantic peak of Teneriffe, and all the lesser volcanic islands of the Eastern and Western Oceans, some of which still continue to rise and sink, alternately, above and beneath the waves.

V. Now, in reverting to the beginning, so far as we can at present trace, we find good evidence, from the nature and extent of the earliest vegetative life, that the atmosphere was probably of a somewhat different constitution from that of the present time, and that, instead of being composed of so large a proportion of oxygen tempered by nitrogen, as most fit for animal as well as vegetable existence; it was then largely charged with carbonic acid gas, which, while hurtful to animal life, was highly qualified to feed the vegetable world. From this we perceive, that an extreme amount of moisture, of carbonic acid, and of internal telluric heat, in addition to the influence of the sun, were greatly calculated to react, in a chemical manner, upon the crust of the Earth, and make it a fit bed for the reception and development of grasses, herbs, and trees, as is found to be confirmed by Geological inquiries; inasmuch as the vegetation of that

period is seen, from its remains, to have been of an exuberance far surpassing anything of the present day. In the course of time, this exuberance of vegetation, by giving forth its excretion of oxygen, as well as by drawing various materials from the deeper soils to the surface; next prepared that surface for the reception and development of nobler plants; while the higher oxygenation of the atmosphere would permit of the introduction of living animals upon the scene; so, ascending from the minutest animalcule to the towering Elephant, Rhinoceros, Camelopard, Hippopotamus, and Behemoth — whatever the latter animal may have been — gradually, I repeat, on examining the long series of stratifications, we find, by ocular demonstration, those creatures rising in the scale of being, as the Earth became more and more prepared for higher, and higher organizations; until we reach the height of man himself, and those coeval animals which surround him, he and they being placed upon the last deposit of the tertiary formations or present outer crust of the Earth; yet not, and most especially as regards man, through any traceable mere transition from more ancient forms of being; but each and all standing out specifically by themselves, as already expatiated upon.

VI. In such Geological investigations, we always find a perfect adaptation of the particular creatures to the circumstances in which they were placed; as exemplified both in the minuter animals, and, also, in the fish, the lizard, and fish-lizard, the winged dragon, so to speak, of the ancient lakes and seas; the Iguanodon and its congeners, the mighty mastodon, the megatherium, and

multitudes of other pre-adamite creations, the remains of which are to be seen in sufficient abundance in naturally disrupted rocks, in quarries, and other human cuttings, and thence collected in museums, and from which, probable representations have been made, by analogical reasoning, of how they might have appeared when alive; the Mastodon, or antique, though not strictly fossil, Elephant, having actually been found entire, imbedded amidst the icy masses of Siberia, with his skin, long wiry hair and all the rest of him in perfect preservation. All of these are found to be fitted with limbs and other organs precisely suited to the nature of their dwelling-places, and the instincts and objects of their being. And, as it must be clear to every sane mind, that the creatures did not produce these circumstances, it must be equally clear that the circumstances could not produce them; such circumstances being only a collateral means, or medium, through which the Active or Living Cause chose to attain its ends or purposes, by a co-adaptation of material conditions coupled with the Creative Will. As to the process by which the barren rock may be ultimately converted into a fruitful soil, we witness it, on a more limited scale, even during our own lives, or, at least, within historical periods; for, if we consider the alterations produced in time, upon such solid masses, what do we see? Take, as an extreme example, a naked bed of granite or feldspar, and observe what occurs. By the slow, but sure, action of moisture and oxygen, as well as frost, &c., the face of the rock is, in time, decomposed, and small granules, or thin pellicles of surface after surface,

are thrown off in the form of a fine dust, though enormous masses are also detached through the agency of frost. This dust possesses most, if not all, of the earthy elements necessary to organic life, and the larger masses only await reduction to dust in time. At first, the most minute cryptogamic plants, or mosses, will make their appearance upon that shallow surface, and cover the rocky matter, here and there, with patches, or tinges of verdure, that look like mere greenish, or bluish stains, visible, perhaps, only when the air is damp. These decay in successive crops, and their decay further enriches the scanty soil; so that higher organisms are able to take root and flourish; especially where the fine waste is washed in quantity by rains and rivulets down into the plains and valleys. These, again, afford food, and attract minute animalcules, whose refuse and dead bodies enrich the soil more and more, and also furnish food for creatures some degrees above themselves. The mould thus gradually becomes deeper and deeper, and more fertile from year to year, and from age to age; until, after the lapse of sundry generations of one set of species after another, we have the solid inorganic, but yet organizable, rock, converted into a deep soil fitted to support the largest trees and nutritive grains, calculated for the subsistence of the largest animals and man. On a grand, though very gradual, scale, this is incessantly going on throughout all the world. From every lofty alp, as from every little hill, particles are perpetually descending, into the plains and valleys, slight locally, but vast in the aggregate, and ultimately leading to the

formation of that beautiful expanse of verdure, which has fully justified the poet in calling this globe of ours "The green Earth," and thus also, even in a literal sense, the so-called everlasting hills "*do bow*;" and every mountain is "*laid low*," and every valley "*exalted*," in the majestic oscillations of creative time which removes, but only to renew, all things forevermore, in order and with a purpose of general harmonious agreement.

VII. Another process, leading to the same results, is now going on, under our observation, in the Pacific Ocean, and elsewhere; where it has, of old, brought into existence numerous islands, not quite of a volcanic origin, now well peopled, and well cultivated. This is the formation of vast reefs of coral, reared by minute animalcules upon other reefs or rocky mountains at the bottom of the ocean; until they rise above the surface of the water, and are ready to entangle all floating fragments of animal and vegetable matter wafted to them by the winds and tides. Thus covered, in the course of time, by such materials as may form a thin soil, birds and amphibious creatures resort to them for rest and shelter, and so continually add to the richness; both drawing their nourishment from the ocean, and leaving so much of their organizable waste upon the soil of the islands. Seeds, in due season, are next floated on to the shore, or are deposited by birds, and these produce crop upon crop of the larger vegetations. Man, at length, takes possession, and finds, or makes, it what has been called a sort of paradise; for all accounts concur in describing the climate of these South-Sea, and other islands of the

kind, as mild and beautiful in the extreme. The air is represented as soft and pure, and the soil fertile and blooming; and, although the originally discovered animals of the natives were only pigs and dogs, and the chief vegetable production the palm-tree; yet the former, with birds and fishes, sufficed for the wants of man in respect of animal food; while the palm, as if by a special provision, met most of his other necessities; since within that one tree he found a nutritive food, and a rich and even exhilarating liquor when the natural heat of the sun had fermented the sweet juice into toddy. Its stems furnished him with solid ready-made pillars, and easily contrived walls for his huts; its ample and strong leaves made his roofs; its nutshells gave him cups and basins; and, in the outer covering of the nuts, he had a material quite equal to all the useful purposes of hemp.

VIII. So extensive are these reefs of coral, that Captain Cooke, long ago, described them as occupying the shores of Australia, between the lofty bluffs of the coast and the outer deep sea, for hundreds upon hundreds of leagues, to a distance of three or four miles out: which shallows shall, no doubt, be covered in the course of ages, by a layer of soil, and thus in the form of fertile flats, like the pampas, and prairies of the opposite side of the globe, be redeemed from ocean for the use of some far distant posterity. And, although such futurity must appear to be very distant indeed, to us who are here at present but as mortal bodies of a day; yet, with minds privileged freely to pursue the things of Eternity and Immensity, we can readily see that it is but a passing

wavelet on the grand stream of creative time. For, what, after all, are these coral reefs as compared with the more ancient oolitic rocks which, through an unbroken thickness of more than ten, or twelve thousand feet, are composed of nothing but the tiny shells or skeletons of animalcules deposited under water in billions upon billions, through generations after generations of their possessors; the process representing periods of time which, granting that they might be approximatively calculated, and written out in arithmetical figures, could scarcely be realised, or rendered practically familiar to the human mind; except by protracted efforts of retrospection, and then only by avoiding the toil of tracing out individualities, and simply discriminating certain typical epochs of change, and reducing the whole to one continuously repeated series of processes, by that faculty of generalization which alone can sustain the mind in those long flights which it takes out of its own limited present, and into that illimitable past and future of Being and Doing, which constitutes Eternity, or the absolute and infinite Present of the Divine I AM.

IX. Having thus considered the probable processes by which the Earth has been brought into its present condition; let us now review how well that condition is fitted to the constitution of man and of the other inferior inhabitants. In the first place, by reason of the peculiar orbit in which it moves round the sun, we have already seen how its general surface receives as equal a distribution of heat and light as is consistent with that figure of a spheroid which universally pervades the celestial system,

and which is considered the perfection of mathematical economy under all the circumstances of the case ; and may be looked upon as a necessary result of the law of gravitation. It is, also, to be observed that the violent disruptions, or the slower revolutions, to which the crust of the Earth has been subjected from time to time : so far from rendering the surface incommodious as a habitation, have so added to convenience, that we cannot view them merely as terrific accidents ; but as pre-ordained necessities, destined to accomplish the same general equality in the distribution of benefits as is attained by the peculiar orbit of the Earth's motion in regard to heat, &c., the requirements and tastes of mankind being, thereby, met in a most remarkable and special manner. Thus, in the local inequalities of climate, we discover, not that one portion of the human family is inordinately favoured, or another doomed to misery and destitution ; but that each one of the particular hot, cold, or temperate zones, is characterised by certain peculiar productions, the possession of the whole of which is yet necessary to a state of perfect human comfort. Thus, in the tropical regions, we have an almost spontaneous growth of rich grains, nutritious and delicious fruits, grateful spices, and various other valuable commodities. In more temperate climates, we have the corn grasses, the fig tree, the olive, the vine, and abundance of numerous other fruits. In still more temperate climates, we have oats, barley, and flax ; one universal carpet of green herbage for flocks and herds, and multitudes of other fatted animals ; and, in very cold latitudes, we have the noble and valuable pine clothing the otherwise barren

steeps, land and sea teeming with animals pre-eminently characterised by fatness, rich mosses, capable of maintaining the life even of such huge animals as the rein deer; with birds of the thickest, and downiest plumage, and beasts furnishing the warmest and softest furs. Here we have the seas, with vast store of whales, seals, cod, and herring; on the land, such huge creatures as the white bear and elk; on the blooming moors, multitudes of grouse and partridges; and, on the rocky isles, and by the upland lakes, water-birds innumerable, all manner of ducks and geese, &c., darkening the air as they rise aloft; while the flapping of their myriad wings is described as sounding like the roar of a rushing storm.

X. We have, also, to take into account the different kinds of mineral wealth, and the varied character of their possessors, as illustrated in the so-called precious metals and precious stones of one region, and the seams of coal, iron, tin, and lead of another; the fruit-bearing trees of this latitude, and the wild pine forests of that: such different latitudes being marked respectively by the moral qualities of their inhabitants; as in the indolent supineness, and love of repose that are found to prevail towards the equator, and the gradually increasing energy, and positive love of action, which is observed as we advance towards the poles; until we reach regions of excessive cold, and those of blight and torpor, where man could no more be expected to put up his dwelling-place than on the tops of the mountains, or in the bowels of the Earth, or caves of ocean.

XI. It has already been said that the united productions of all these climates are requisite for the thorough

comfort of any civilised human being ; and hence we find almost all such productions gathered together in those countries noted for their more perfect culture, such culture being as natural a mental instinct in man as it is for the creatures below him to trim their furs or feathers, or make their nests, or hunt their prey, or nurse their young. If any one could feel inclined to believe, as he might be apt to do on the first blush of the argument, that a colder climate were essentially less calculated to conduce to happiness than a warmer one, he would only have to look at actual facts to be undeceived. For who could question, after such reflection, that the inhabitants of the temperate, and even the cold, countries of Europe, are much more comfortable than the negroes of Africa, or the equatorial inhabitants of Asia or America? And the reasons are obvious. For, although food is almost ready-formed for the latter, and they require but little shelter or clothing, yet the very listlessness, and sense of oppression that is produced by excessive heat is not consistent with that mental and bodily tension, and active, yet rational, excitement, which are certainly necessary to the full and real enjoyment of the human faculties. On the other hand, though the former have to make great exertions to extract their food from the soil—after they have passed the stage in which they subsisted on wild nuts, and berries, and the spoils of the chase—and although they require, as a necessity of their existence, to be well clothed and sheltered, still, they find that the very hardness of their exertions is a source of intense enjoyment, and, as a simple fact, we know that the gratification of appetite

after work, and the invigorating warmth and sound sleep that result from such wholesome labour, are signally more delightful than the palled satiety that never knows hunger ; and the unrefreshing sleep, and melting insipid languor, that always accompany an indolent life under a relaxing sun. Hence in such colder latitudes, even those who are born to the vastest wealth, and quite exempt from all labour as a necessity, are often the most laborious of all ; each one, according to his tastes and talents, either speeding amidst the chase, or toiling at the oar, shaking the senate with storms of eloquence, or bearing the weight and anxieties of empire, or assiduously working in the fields of literature, or sounding the heights and depths of science and philosophy.

XII. But the truth is, that all such varied conditions of climate and character only lead to an exchange of favours amongst the sundry populations of the globe ; so that the richest products of the tropics find their way to northern latitudes ; whilst the useful growths, and minerals, and manufactures, of the temperate countries are anxiously sought after, and greatly prized in equatorial regions. This has brought into existence the commerce of the world, and has thus had the effect of binding man to man, and nation to nation ; not by mere parchment treaties, to be torn up, perhaps, as soon as their temporary convenience is at an end ; but by the bonds of a reciprocal friendship, and a mutual sense of inter-dependence, almost amounting to a necessity—men and nations which might never otherwise have come together, or known any other sources of mental or bodily gratification than those obtainable within their own comparatively narrow bounds.

XIII. Moreover, these extreme degrees of temperature, which result from the greater or lesser force of the sun's rays, have been much modified, locally, by the inequalities of the Earth's surface. Thus, the genial warmth of the milder climes, is often attained in colder latitudes by the concentration of heat in deep and sheltered valleys, or by the tempering virtues of the sea ; especially when warm currents, such as the gulph stream of the Atlantic Ocean, are carried from the equator towards the pole ; and, also by lofty ranges of mountains sheltering the plains and valleys from the cold blasts of the north, or other bleak quarters. In hot climates, in like manner, the same beneficial tempering of the atmosphere occurs from the presence of seas and oceans ; from the regular day and night currents of air ; and from mountain breezes ; and, indeed, the precise temperature and productions of temperate and cold countries are frequently met with in the hottest climates, by ascending the higher mountain ranges. In the Andes, Himalayas, and the Mountains of the Moon, beyond Abyssinia, every variety of climate is found. The Blue Mountains of Jamaica, and the lofty flats of the Hindu Kutch, possess a temperature as bracing as that of the elevated moors of Great Britain ; whilst many of the valleys of Norway and Sweden are visited by an amount of heat during their short summers, almost equaling that of the West Indies. Mount Etna exhibits similar and very marked gradations of temperature, its warm base being clothed with vine-yards and olives, &c., its middle heights producing the grains, and trees of the most temperate latitudes ; its still more elevated lines being belted

by the dark pines of the north, and its summit presenting nothing but an inhospitable mass of volcanic crags, utterly barren and black where not buried in snow ; the whole scene appalling to the sight and hearing ; yet affording to the mind the materials of a most earnest speculation and sublime enjoyment ; as it ranges over sea and land, and ascends from Earth to Heaven, or gazes downwards into that steaming gulph the secrets of which are as yet so involved in mystery.

XIV. The ocean, then, by girding the land, and intersecting it with seas, channels, creeks and bays, &c., tends very much to maintain a mild equality of temperature, by cooling the hot gales of equatorial regions, while it warms the freezing blasts from the poles. For, as every one knows, it is not the latitude alone that determines the amount of heat ; but also the presence, or the absence, of the above-mentioned modifying agents ; so that we must always consider whether the polar air sweeps directly from its icy continents over flat, dry, naked, and unprotected plains ; or whether it is arrested by mountains, or extensive ever-green forests ; or deprived of its keenness by the more equable heat of the open sea. In like manner, we have to consider, whether the furnace-like blasts of the equator rush over dry stones, or sandy deserts, parching up all life and vegetation ; or whether they be cooled by passing through the gorges, and over the summit of snow-clad mountains ; or softened by the moisture of seas and lakes. Our own British Isles, the lands around Hudson's Bay, Siberia, and Kamschatka, all lie in much the same line in relation to the North Pole ; yet these,

our islands, from being surrounded by so open a sea, and from being bathed by the Gulph Stream from the West Indies, is much warmer than any of the other parts just named. So, also, central Africa, is in nearly the same equatorial line as Borneo and Peru; yet the two latter are well inhabited by Europeans, while the former, in many parts of vast extent, is not consistent with their health and comfort; being, in fact, positively injurious and deadly to the white races.

XV. Then, there is another very obvious use in the seas, lakes, and rivers: for these expanses and depths of water which, at first sight, seem to act as the greatest barriers between nation and nation, ultimately prove to be the principal means of their inter-communication. Where were the general commerce and civilization of the world, but for the facilities offered by rivers, lakes, seas, and oceans? So much is this recognised, that men have, in all historical ages, endeavoured to enlarge the extent of water traffic by artificial improvement of lakes and rivers, and by the formation of canals; as in China, and in ancient Egypt, &c., as well as in our own times. Even with all the justly boasted advantages which railways afford in these latter days, the whole system shrinks into insignificance, in comparison with that facile and enduring means of communication by water, which is not circumscribed within any little lines and limits, but is intersectable at all points, and in all directions, and needs neither formation, nor alteration, nor repair. In fact, if we examine all the regions of the globe, with the view of determining the best natural localities, that is, those

localities which are best calculated to receive and develop the seeds of industry, wealth, and happiness, we shall find them to correspond—other things being equal—with the extent of sea-board, and the number of bays, creeks, inlets, and rivers, which happen to intersect the solid land. It is the abundant possession of these advantages by America, in her extensive coasts, and her large and numerous lakes, rivers, and islands, which has tended so far to hasten the progress of population, wealth, and civilization, amongst those States of yesterday, as one may say, and it is the want of such means of communication, or lines of traffic and settlement on the continent of Africa, which has so long shut out that mighty, and otherwise productive territory, from the benefits of commerce, and full cultivation. Similar disadvantages have operated against Australia, to a considerable extent, notwithstanding her beauty, and fertility in grain, wool, and gold; while the complete insularity, and compact moderate dimensions of Great Britain, coupled with her agricultural and mineral productiveness, and the vast tortuous extension of her bays, friths, and rivers, along with noble harbours, have enabled her inhabitants to launch forth, with facility, into every latitude, take possession of the salient points and strongholds of the earth's surface, carry their commerce into every country, colonise fresh and extensive empires at opposite sides of the globe, and thus become the prime civilizers, and arbiters, of the modern world. It is this favoured position, and its natural result in maritime ascendancy, that enables her in so great a measure to be independent of foreign alliances; except as they may

conduce to the fair benefit of herself, and mankind at large, and to the expansion of commerce, that makes her the common refuge of all other peoples and kings in their days of trouble and persecution ; that gives her the empire of the sea, and entitles her to interpose, with an arm of strength, as she habitually does, between the peaceful rights of men as a whole race, and the encroachments of tyranny and injustice, whether arising from private, or from national piracy ; striking her giant blows here, there, and everywhere, against the public enemy ; while he cannot tell where the next thunderbolt may descend. Happy has it been for mankind at large, that this almost impregnable stronghold, being also the seat of so much power and ceaseless activity, is not governed either by such selfish personal imperialism or popular rapacity, as has, in former times, ruled the world by mere military superiority, and grinding taxation of the vanquished, until the idleness and vice of the one side, and the feebleness and impoverishment of the other, ended in the one common ruin of both, and the general arrestment of civilization throughout the world for a longer or shorter time ; but that her people, as a body, whether of higher or lower degree, are moved by an indomitable love of honest enterprise and useful labour, a desire for reciprocal exchanges, rather than for rapacious extortions, and a solemn recognition of those benign principles of justice, tempered with mercy and generosity, especially towards the poor, the aged, the infirm, and even the guilty, which are expressed in their laws, and which they have derived from the studious regard which has been paid by

all the constituted authorities to the ways, and will, of that Divine Being whose attributes we are now contemplating; and with the practical application of which principles, even the common, and so-called uneducated masses, have become imbued, through ages of habitual training therein, by their appointed teachers. So, hitherto, has it been, and so is it now, though, should a time possibly arrive, as some do desire, when such public recognition of the fundamental principles of religion and of Divine Providence might be cast to the winds, when the State might abandon one of its highest duties, and the minds of the multitude so left to be distracted by every uncertain blast of doctrine; till, without any standard, confusion, and fanaticism, and doubts of every kind, should emasculate their confidence in common sense and sound reasoning, and set at nought all the utterances of the conscience concerning a higher criterion of conduct than mere self-interest, and also an habitual regard for a future responsibility to God; then, with but a slight alteration, the prophecy may become applicable, which Shakspeare has put into the mouth of "Old John of Gaunt, time-honoured Lancaster," when he exclaims,

"This royal throne of Kings, this scepter'd isle,
 This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
 This other Eden, demi-paradise:
 This fortress, built by nature for herself
 Against infection, and the hand of war:
 This happy breed of men, this little world,
 This precious stone, set in the silver sea,
 Which serves it in the office of a wall,

Or, as a moat defensive of a house,
 Against the envy of less happier lands ;
 This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,
 This nurse, this teeming womb, of royal Kings,
 Feared from their breed, and famous by their birth,
 Renowned for their deeds * * * *
 This land of such dear souls, this dear, dear, land
 Dear for her reputation through the world,
 Is now leased out, (I die pronouncing it),
 Like to a tenement, or paltry farm ;
 England, bound in with the triumphant sea,
 Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege,
 Of watery Neptune, is now bound in with shame,
 With "Godless schemes" and rotten "parchment bills."
 That England that was wont to conquer others,
 Hath made a shameful conquest of itself ! "

And yet we may hope and trust that it may be far otherwise, since the root, heart, and body of the ancient tree is still so sound, though some of the outlying branches may have been seared, from without, by certain pernicious foreign doctrines and perverted sentiments, in regard not to a real, but to a misnamed *economy* on the one hand, and a misnamed *liberality* on the other.

XVI. But the rivers, and seas, and oceans, also afford an inexhaustible supply of food, and of other valuable materials to mankind ; as the flesh, the oils, and the skins of a vast variety of fishes and other water animals, the whalebone, the isinglass, and the mother of pearl, with innumerable beautiful and useful shells, not to speak of the invaluable and necessary material of salt, not merely as applied to the more direct purposes of



man in diet, preservation of food, &c., &c., but also as wafted by the vapours of the sea far inland, there to supply the vegetable world, and, through that, the whole animal creation, with those elements of Potassa, Soda, Chlorine, Iodine, &c., &c., which are essential to the existence of life in all its gradations. But for such provision these soluble salts would, in time, be washed out of the soils, by the rush of the rains of the uplands towards the rivers and lakes, and thence to the sea; and so the solid land would become impoverished, instead of being improved by time, as it actually is.


XVII. Then, the mighty mountains, bleak, barren, and bare, as they may at first appear to us, and seeming only to interpose their craggy peaks and frozen ridges as impassable ramparts between nation and nation; as the Pyrenees and Alps, &c., in Europe, the Rocky Mountains and Andes, &c., in America, and the Hymalayas, &c., in Asia, besides being the grand sources of moisture to the inhabited plains, do they not afford us supplies of the most valuable and durable materials, applicable to every useful purpose, as gold, silver, tin, lead, mercury, iron, granite, free-stone, marbles, and innumerable other appliances for building, and for manufactures? But for their upheaval from the bowels of the earth, all these, and many other useful substances, as our lime, our coal, our sulphur, and our slate, &c., would still have remained at such an unapproachable depth, as never to have been guessed at, far less explored, and turned to such practical account. These, indeed, are to be viewed by the rational mind as the magazines and

mighty storehouse prepared from the beginning for the benefit of our species ; the whole fruits of which, as now witnessed in the aspect of our cities, and our fleets, our innumerable utensils and tools, and, in short, in all the accompaniments of civilized life, were already visible to the God of Providence, when, in the apt language of the Book of Job, He “*made a vein for the silver, and a place for the gold,*” when he ordained that “*iron should be taken out of the earth,*” and “*brass molten out of the stone.*” For, even though repudiating the authority of such a book, as some of our opponents might do, and admitting that no ordinance, decree, or purpose, of such a kind, had ever been published, or even hinted at, there stand the facts, with all their precise results, and the inference of purpose is irresistible ; such purpose implying the presence of mind as the efficient, or really active cause of all such arrangements and co-adaptations ; since circumstances are never seen to crop up of themselves, and when they do crop up, under antecedent, but still only intermediate, causes, they are always governed by laws, not acting at random, but with an end and meaning in all their operations so clear to the reason when properly understood, and always becoming so much the more and more understood in the course of time and enquiry, that, when not understood by the reason, we decline to pronounce judgment, simply from want of positive evidence, and reserve the matter for further investigation, still confident however, of the ultimate result being fruitful as to the discovery of further causes, means, and ends, whithersoever we may move, seeing that the interrogatives what,

how, where, when, whence, whither, wherefore, and why, as questions necessarily applied by the mind to all matters whatever, must have their correlative answers whether as yet known or unknown, or even as yet, to us, unknowable altogether. And here the question about "*mystery*" again recurs, as some have said, as we have already seen, that it is only man himself that has imposed these supernatural meanings upon nature in an arbitrary manner, and then posited a God of his own begetting as an explanation of his own fancies. But so far from our facile interpretations enabling us to stamp our own image upon nature, and then to worship it as God, as they suggest, it is, on the contrary, from the consciousness of our very ignorance that we chiefly arrive at the conviction of His existence. Mysteries lie before us in myriads, and, could we either understand them all at a glance, or not understand them at all, we should see nothing wonderful in them; as, in the first instance, we should infer a human origin of them, and, in the second, nothing at all; but we know that we can unravel them gradually and in part, and as we see so much evidence of design in what little we do clear up, we infer an infinitely greater ratio of such design in that infinitely greater Fund or Deep which still remains in mystery; feeling perfectly assured that the want of light is not so much in the mystery itself as in the mind that contemplates it; and, being also confident, through our experience in the past, that by dint of long looking and long thinking, the rays from both sides will ultimately commingle, and afford further and further insight into the realm of reality.

XVIII. But Job goes on further to say, "*As for the earth, out of it cometh bread, and under it is turned up, as it were, fire.*" The latter observation is strictly applicable to our present coal-beds, and also to domestic gas, as the more inflammable essence of the coal; though Job may have been more especially alluding to the purely bituminous minerals in his own region. The allusion to bread is of deeper meaning than the mere springing up of corn out of the soil, for it is to be accepted as the representative of living tissue, being frequently designated in these same writings as "*The staff of life.*" And this is literally true; for, in fact, the bodies of men and animals are found, by modern science, to be composed of a number of certain simple, or at least, as yet undecomposable elements, these being, to wit, oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, carbon, sulphur, phosphorus, iodine, chlorine, fluorine, iron, manganese, magnesium, sodium, potassium, silicum, and calcium. These primary elements being combined in numbers and proportions almost endless, by the vital synthetic energy, constitute, under that energy, the proximate elements, or compound radicals of the vegetable and animal tissues and fluids; the vegetable being endowed with the power of converting the inert elements of the non-living soil into its own organic compounds; while the animal can build up its components, only through the aid of the vegetable organization. Some of these elements, such as the oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, carbon, calcium, and phosphorus, are in larger proportion, the rest of them being in less; but each, according to its appointed measure, is equally necessary to a sound state of existence. The

diminution of any one of them would seriously interfere with the course of healthy action, while the total deprivation of even the least of them would, according to the creature which required it, sooner or later inevitably induce premature death. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that the soil, and the air, from which we derive our subsistence, should contain a due proportion of all these substances. How admirably this scheme is carried out can be adequately appreciated only by those who have made the chemical constitution of men and animals, as well as vegetables, and the chemical constitution of soils, the subject of their more especial study; but the mere statement of the general result will serve the present purpose, as it would require volume upon volume to explain such matters in all their minuteness of details. Let it only be stated that the principal elements, such as carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, and the like, are found in abundance everywhere, either free as in the air, or chemically combined, yet ready for use, as in water; or else lying latent in the solid rocks, and there condensed, though light as air when free, into adamantine hardness and ponderosity that the other elements, such as chlorine, sodium, potassium, and iodine, are carried up in sufficient abundance from the ocean, and deposited by rains and vapours on the solid land, or else have been so deposited in the rocks of geological ages long gone by; while the iron, the lime, and the sulphur which are usually deposited in massy beds, and at great depths, have yet been nearly equally distributed throughout all soils in an amount sufficient for the purposes of vegetable



and animal life, firstly, by means of volcanic upheaval, and other convulsions or revolutions of the preparatory ages, and next by the washing down of such elements from the mountain ridges to the arable plains and valleys, by continuous fallings of rain. Thus, the hard skeletons of innumerable animalcules are formed chiefly of silica, or flint, a substance somewhat analogous to our artificial manufacture called glass; the shells of several land and sea creatures, such as snails, lobsters, crabs, and all shell-fish, as well as the shells of birds' eggs, &c., are formed of carbonate of lime, or a substance somewhat similar to chalk or marble, while the bones of men and animals are composed of Phosphate of Lime, a substance which meets with nothing analogous to itself in the mineral world in any degree of aggregation, such as occurs in the case of the flint, and the chalk, or marble. These three different kinds of skeletons, however, are not convertible into one another, according to any merely accidental constitution of the surrounding soils, such as the theory of self-development, by accident, would favour. The materials of which they are respectively composed, however similar in one point of view, namely, their common power of forming a supporting framework, or skeleton for the softer structures, can never be substituted for each other, according to merely local chemical convenience. The silicious, or flinty shell of the animalcule, cannot be replaced by the Carbonate or Phosphate of Lime, should the flinty element happen to be deficient, or altogether absent; nor, on the other hand, can the crustaceous orders, for their shells, or the bodies of birds, &c., for their eggs, assume


Silica, or Phosphate of Lime, instead of the appointed carbonate; nor can men or quadrupeds, or birds, &c. ever form silicious, or cretaceous bones in the place of their peculiar Phosphate of Lime. Thus, therefore, we see, that these varieties of structure, and of structural material, are not accidental results, dependent merely upon the nature of the supplies within the soils, or in other words, the product of outward circumstances; but that each organism is pre-ordained to act throughout all its parts, and in every individual atom of its structure, according to certain specific ideas, or laws of reason, and to appropriate, to its own set ends, certain specific elements; without which ideas or laws of reason—and, as ideas or laws of reason, necessarily proceeding from mind—we should, inevitably, encounter deviations and variations of structure and composition, as innumerable as the sundry local circumstances and elements so re-acted upon by—if such be conceivable—wildly wandering, fortuitous, and blind ungoverned forces.

XIX. There is one fact of a specially remarkable character, regarding the distribution of our own bone elements in their particular form of combination, that deserves attention, namely, that the bone Phosphate of Lime is never found in any concentrated masses, as already mentioned, but is distributed, not only throughout all the known strata of the earth, or those later layers of rock, &c., which have been slowly deposited from water, but even in the more ancient unstratified granite, feldspar, quartz, and the rest of them, in nearly equal proportions. For a long time it was a great mystery to chemical philosophers,

whence the Phosphorus could have originated, as it was never found by them in any other substances excepting those of animal origin, such as nervous matter, and blood, &c., but more especially in bone. Further investigation, however, by nicer modes of analysis, demonstrated that it could be obtained from almost every natural earth and rock in small quantities, equally mixed throughout their entire mass, and yet in a proportion sufficient to supply plants, with that amount which is necessary to form the bones, &c., of animals. When, from some faulty action of the constitutional functions, a sufficient quantity of this Phosphate is not appropriated to its appointed purpose, we have a deficiency of the hardening bony material; while the gelatinous glue, or cement, so to speak, of the bone, being thus not sufficiently supported, the bone is soft and flexible, so exhibiting that peculiar disease known familiarly under the name of Rickets. On the other hand, when the diminishing vitality of old age causes a diminished supply of the nutritive juices, and the harder bony element encroaches upon the more pliable gelatine, we observe a marked increase of brittleness in the skeleton, with a tendency to break, under degrees of violence that would make little or no impression upon the bones of childhood, or youth, or even full maturity.

XX. Now, it must be admitted, that this fact of the nearly equal distribution of certain scarce elements throughout almost all soils, coupled with the corresponding fact that such scarce elements are essentially necessary to the production and preservation of vegetable and

animal life, affords to all reasoning and unbiassed minds an indubitably solid ground for the conclusion that He who ordained the existence of living creatures, had also pre-ordained the presence of all those conditions which He knew to be necessary for their well-being. In short, we recognise, or rather cannot help recognising, that there is here, as in all other known spheres of creation, the employment of a great and definite, though only partially understood means, towards the accomplishment of a great and definite, though only partially understood end ; and that both the means employed, and the ends attained, are characterised by features and processes, so far transcending anything that could have entered into the mind of man to conceive of itself, and so infinitely above and beyond even imagination, that he can attribute the result, as a manifest reality, only to an infinite power of beneficent intelligence, such as could belong only to an infinitely wise and beneficent being, replete with self-consciousness and spiritual activity, who is God the Father of All, and the alone real and continuous moral cause, governing the universe from eternity to eternity. For, even supposing, as some not irreverently have done, that not this Almighty One Himself, but some great, yet not omniscient, spirit had governed this world from the beginning, and, from his want of omniscience, had proceeded cautiously, and felt his way at every step, as we do ourselves, and so produced those gradual changes and advancements which we witness in geological and other researches, yet such supposition would only postpone the final conclusion, seeing that the question would still recur, as in human



contrivances and their authors, whence that Great Spirit, and whence His powers, and how should all the other forces of nature at the vastest distances, so aid Him in His operations upon this earthly scene with such perfect precision of their initiatory basic laws, such as have remained unaltered through such incalculable periods of time? How? except by the explanation that all His, as well as our own human, powers, and the forces which we wield, were derived from an eternal fund of absolute knowledge, wisdom, and power, whose sole possessor is The I AM, or eternal spiritual and intellectual presence, who needeth no such helpers, though He may will to confer happiness upon other conscious beings, by making them His intermediate means of operating upon the more passive objects, or the less potent intelligences, within His creation, of which they themselves, however, are but a part, thus destined to fulfil certain purposes of its supreme ruler.

XXI. There is yet another great and important view to be taken of the relation which man bears to his earthly habitation, and that is, the express fitness of his mental faculties to subdue and replenish it. In the more favoured regions of his first necessarily miraculous appearance, in the special sense of the word, as unprecedented, we find a certain provision made for his more immediate wants in the mildness of climate, and spontaneous productions of the soil; while, even in the most inhospitable zones, we find a like provision for such common wants in the spoils of the chase, both as regards food and clothing. But, still, we know that he is moved by higher desires than

those that relate simply to subsistence and corporeal enjoyment; and, accordingly, we find him provided with such powers as shall make such higher desires comparatively easy of gratification. Obviously, it was never meant that he should "*live by bread alone*," nor yet that everything should be provided for him in a direct manner, but that he should possess such faculties as to be able to provide for himself, and to discover a deep source of inward happiness in so doing. We find neither food, clothing, nor houses, such as we naturally aspire to, ready made for us—for art itself is natural to man, as the necessary result of the exercise of his inborn instincts—but we find all the rough elements thereof, and the models for them, lying before us in profusion, so that we have only to look around and exert our powers, and persevere in such exertion, in order to fashion all things according to our desires. As civilization advances, we plough, and sow, and plant, and gather in our varied harvests, to be formed into innumerable luxuries; we ransack the mine for coal, metal, and stone, and thus produce all the useful and ornamental articles of life; we bake the clay into brick and pottery, chisel the rude block into lofty pillar, grand arch, dome, and pyramid, and graceful statuary; we rear the palaces of marble, iron, and crystal, build the ship, contrive the railway and steam engine; span the rivers and valleys with bridges of stupendous dimension, and connect the most distant parts, morally and intellectually, with each other, by means of the swift-fleeting electricity; and in all these grand and finely ingenious labours, we at once recognise the real temporal happiness, and material glory of our race.

XXII. In the irregularities of the surface of the earth, with its hills, and flower-enamelled plains, its mountains and deeper valleys, its placid rivers, and wild tumbling torrents and cataracts, its calm or stormy seas and oceans, its dark forests and caves and yawning gulphs, its horrid naked peaks and ridges and dreadful volcanoes, and also in the clear skies, bright verdure, and softly sighing gales of one season or climate, as contrasted with the blackening clouds, naked wastes, and howling tempests of another, do we not find, in all these, a full correspondence with the tastes, sentiments, and ideas of the human mind; and do not the expression of those tastes, sentiments, and ideas, in consonance with these various features of external nature, as exemplified in the softer or sublimer efforts of the poet, the painter, and the musician, also redound to the real heartfelt happiness, and more romantic glory of our race?

XXIII. Then, the great ruling principles, or laws of reason, upon the efficiency of which all other things depend, are not open to mere casual observation, even when implanted, as innate faculties, within our own minds, and instinctively guiding the current of our earliest thoughts, but require to be discovered, or worked out from among the darkest and most complicated operations of nature, including those of the mind itself, as well as of the body, by the patient exercise of our highest faculties in protracted investigations, and through long trains of thoroughly connected thought. By such prolonged exercise and long thinking, through successive generations of keen-sighted men, we devise the special sciences, and,

from them, uprear the proud fabric of a general philosophy, which latter is, indeed, the science of the sciences; and in such science and philosophy, which not only examine into material bodies by means of instruments which exalt and extend the sphere of the senses as well as by chemical analysis and geometrical and algebraical computation, but also sift out the invisible essences of things, in their laws of order and government, tenaciously grasping at those first principles of mind which lead up to an apprehension of the necessary, the infinite, and the eternal, as applicable to space, time, and number, and from these, to the incomprehensible, simply because necessarily infinite and eternal, origin of all spiritual and other being, do we not again, in those lofty occupations, recognise the real mental happiness, and greatest intellectual glory of our race?

XXIV. But while our mental faculties are thus calculated to attain such degrees of excellence, and while our passions, and affections, and other energies, are intended to work for the good both of themselves and others, still these faculties are, at first, shrouded under an utter helplessness, and continue so, if not cultivated, and the passions, affections, and other energies, are too often carried into wrong channels, and exerted only to our own detriment, or to that of others. In the midst of this weakness and misdirection, and actual wickedness, however, we find that these very evils are the direct means of drawing forth, under the guidance of the conscience, our finest qualities—pity for helpless infancy and old age, and other forms of weakness and dependence, charity towards

the poor, the afflicted, and the erring, generous friendship and steadfast fidelity under the obligations of mutual support, courageous defence of the abused and oppressed, a deep sense of reliance on Divine Providence and submission to the Divine Will, a consequently constant effluence of deep-felt prayer, not always uttered by the lips, but certainly abiding in the inmost heart, a settled conviction of the necessity for a divine mercy or mediatory influence towards our frailties and faults, in amelioration of absolute justice, as expounded in the Hebrew, Christian, Mahomedan, and most other systems of Theology, and, in all these effects, though necessarily springing from the very imperfection of our nature, we still recognise the real angelic happiness and the heavenward hopes, and the moral and religious glory of our race.

XXV. And, in regard to the prime guiding and judging principle upon which all such feelings are naturally made to hinge in a moral point of view, we must once more bear in mind what we may call, after what has been already said, the obvious, though not, on that account, less important fact of the infallibility of the moral sense, or conscience, in relation to all thoughts and deeds proceeding from men as rational beings. The senses, the passions, the imagination, and the judgment, may each mislead us unconsciously to ourselves; but the conscience, or moral sense of subjective right and wrong, is the one immutable test by which all our feelings must be tried, no matter how various, or how varying, they may be in degree or kind. By this prime rule of right action, all the secret motives of emotion and will must be ultimately

self-judged ; the motives, as the hidden springs of thought and action being, by its power, compelled either to accuse, or else excuse, their own rectitude of purpose. Whatsoever proceeds from conscious intention for good must be morally right, no matter how erroneous may be the means employed, or how disastrous the results ; and, on the other hand, whatsoever proceeds from conscious intention for evil, must imply moral guilt, however harmless the means, or however beneficent, by mistake, may be the actual consequences. Each individual conscience, therefore, under God, and as implanted by God, as a moral sense of responsibility to Himself, is the unerring arbiter of every man's own conduct in this life, quite irrespective of his knowledge, or genius, however great, or however small, and no amount of casuistry, however it may puzzle the heads of others, can ever affect the moral judgment formed of the heart, by that heart itself, as to its primary impulses of intention. Conscience, shining therein, as a pellucid mirror, remains undimmed, even by the foulness of its possessor in deed or thought, and continues forever unchangeable in its essence as a discriminative consciousness, and absolute knowledge of the real intentions of such possessor. That possessor may, of course, by his power of secrecy and deception, disguise or falsify his motives in the sight of others, but however he may try—inasmuch as such trial could only prove the consciousness of something wrong—he can never disguise them from himself, nor cease to feel that this unquenchable spark of the Divinity within him, speaks of the moral origin and essence of his being, and ranks him,

with this special faculty, quite above, and apart from, any laws or properties that do, or can, belong to matter as such and of itself, or even those of personal and temporal interest that govern the will apart from the conscience. For, the very best of men are conscious that they naturally will, or wish, the attainment of innumerable ends, which, though often within their power, the conscience yet restrains them from effecting. Certainly, the existence of moral guilt, supposes the pre-existence of moral law; but this faculty is that very essence and criterion of all moral law, which is impressed upon the heart of every man by the finger of God Himself, and which indicates, as its great purposed end, the perfection of a government of wisdom and love, as alone worthy of its full approbation. Ignorance, therefore, may lead to error, and the passions to an open wild rebellion, but the dictates of this conscience still command us to resist the one and dispel the other; and so it remains paramount, under all possible circumstances, as an axis of cohesion for the whole moral constitution; let it, through the erratic force of its other faculties, including the will, whirl whithersoever it may. What self-consciousness is to the intellectual, conscience is to the moral, functions of being; the very self, without which we were merely passive animal machines—ships, as it were, drifting over a wilderness of ocean, without rudder or compass—the plaything of every gust of passion or feeling, showing an apparent activity and power, but without any righteous, or unrighteous, aim, or purpose. Then, whence this moral touchstone of justice, and of all other rules of duty

recognised by rational souls—whence this guiding star which attracts us to a sphere of action far above all temporal interests and worldly gain ; whence, but from the Divine Author of those souls, as a leaven of His own nature, and continually telling them, from their inmost depths, that “the voice of conscience is the voice of God?” of God as the author of it and them, and an unerring judge, that is to say, so far as pure abstract and inner motive is concerned, as distinguished from that knowledge and directive intellectual judgment, which are acquired by educational culture, but which, though they may modify and guide the conscience, in its outward acts, or in the use of means, can never alter its internal essence or affect its prerogative as a judge of moral intention for good or for evil at its deepest root, and to the very core of the individual being. So, when it passes a verdict against the motives of the conscious self, that self is inwardly and involuntarily stricken with shame, remorse, or self-contempt. And so, also, when the same faculty gives a calm but profound approbation of the individual conduct, it affords an inward sense of the highest kind of happiness—happiness equally calm and profound, far exalted above all the pleasures and advantages of the ordinary life, and of such a nature that it is a source of comfort amidst the direst misfortunes, and of peace amidst the cruelest storms, such as can alone illustrate the too often misunderstood moral axiom that “virtue is its own reward,” as an end and not as a means except to attain divine approval ; and which is still more aptly defined as “that peace which the world cannot give,” “the peace

of God, which passeth all understanding." From this power, not only of concealment, but of actual and positive deception, as to the motives of human beings amongst each other, and which entails a corresponding responsibility for its use or abuse, it is easily to be seen how, before the Supreme Tribunal of Him who formed the heart, and knew all its thoughts ere yet they were born into the individual consciousness, so many who may have appeared as best in the sight of the world may have been really the worst, and so many who have appeared as worst may, in like manner, have been really the best. But, over this inscrutable subject, in regard to others than the individual self, a thick veil of darkness must stand before the human eye for evermore, and any real adjudication thereon in absolute knowledge, as contradistinguished from belief or probability, must be left as a matter between the individual conscience and the All-wise Scrutator of Hearts alone. It is truly sacred, because unappropriable, ground, over which the wings of faith, and fancy, and suspicion, are constantly fluttering, but upon which the human judgment can find no certain foothold of real knowledge, or perform more than guesswork, and that, only, in connection with overt acts, which themselves are of uncertain motive. All the faculties of the intellect may be positively gauged and estimated according to their sundry performances; but the human heart is to all, but its individual self, an enigma, though, through a certain semblance of the Divine insight, mankind, practically and universally, do seek to grasp at the inmost motives of others, and often

act as if they knew the very truth, even as it is in nature and in God. Some, in the general estimation of the civilized world, have been thought to have had this insight in a most remarkable degree, and, more especially our own Poet of Avon, whose mighty grasp of mind, and largeness of sympathy with every sort of feeling, from the most sublime to the most ridiculous, from the highest and holiest to the meanest and most base, and from the most generous and tender to the most cold and cruel, have enabled him to picture details and depths of character which, to all, appear to be marvellously true; and, yet, this has been done only by throwing his own infinite diversity of feelings into the various recorded occasions, and reflecting the living ferment thereof upon his dramatic scenes, which, therefore, appear as if he had really

“Held the mirror up to nature,”

instead of evolving them from his own creative intellect, as a sort of semblance of the real divine fecundity, and absolute knowledge of truth.

D. N.

PART SIXTH.

CONCLUSION—SHOWING THAT THE EVIDENCES OF DESIGN AND PURPOSE AFFORD PROOFS OF THE GODHEAD.

I. Now, from all the foregoing considerations, we are, I think, clearly led to infer intention and design, and sentiment in creation, or a moral and intellectual source of Primal Causation ; our thoughts naturally, philosophically, and according to a law of mental necessity, reverting to a Great First Cause of this kind, as the prime Cause of causes, originating and supporting the whole scheme of things, all the processes of which, wherever we encounter them, appear merely as facts of sequence, and cannot possibly be made to appear as facts of primary causation ; inasmuch as all such intermediate so-called causes are themselves merely effects of the One prior Cause ; even our own wills, and other faculties which, being semblances thereof, are the likeliest of all to such a kind of cause, being, as we all know, only relatively free to devise and originate, by dint of means already provided for us, and with not a shadow of absolute powers either in or of ourselves, but evidently and undeniably derived from some

fruitful source of mental energy and moral purpose. Certainly, a great calamity would befall science were all abstruse questionings to be cut short by a simple reference to God, as the Last Cause in all things, and so any further inquiry into intermediate causes stifled ; but a true philosophy does not so halt in its activity, but is rather the more stimulated to exertion, by the consideration of a Last Cause, so sublime and so adorable in the very essence of His Being, and so worthy of its deepest homage and worship in personality ; seeing that this philosophy itself, though it be abstract as a word, yet really represents the collective personality of all those minds, who, by their labours, have evoked it from out these works of God. Herein it is, that we must feel so pleased to recognise, in the theatre of cosmology, that all-embracing circle of the sciences from within which, inclusive of self, is derived all our natural knowledge of God, as that creating and superintending Power from which all principles and laws, with their effects, proceed, and without whose ever active presence there could have been nothing save chaos and confusion, or rather, nothing at all. For, even if we could suppose, which we certainly cannot, while in a sane condition, that there could exist, of themselves, as blind agents, such initiatory principles, or laws, or ultimate, or primary facts, or whatever else any school may choose to name them, as those of gravitation and motion, or of attraction and repulsion, or chemical elective affinity, or vital growth, sense, and volition, or, what is even far more to the point, of the moral sentiments of love and aversion, the various other animal and human

feelings, moral sense or conscience, and human intellectuality, with all the necessary, and acquired, truths inherent therein, by virtue of attributes totally opposed and foreign to those of matter; yet to what would they tend, if not made to act co-operatively towards the attainment of the one great end, or general scheme, under one designing and superintending intelligence, seeing that no one or more of them can thus govern and direct all the rest? The perfect balance maintained between the action and reaction of such opposed, and yet mutually interdependent forces, at once arrests the attention of mind, and directs it to the contemplation of some source of Universal Order: not acting after the manner of any blind passive forces, as in the secondary and derived action of matter, but influenced by the spiritual motive of effecting, through reason, the accomplishment of specific design and purpose for usefulness and happiness, as is evident to us who inherit a leaven of such principle of purpose and design within ourselves, and who, therefore, know to a certainty, that such a thing does exist, though far from being foolish enough to imagine that, out of all this boundless universe, we are alone the possessors of it, and that none appertains to other creatures, or to Him "*who made us, and not we ourselves,*" and made us as miracles of design, each organ and the whole aggregation of organs, effecting ends so clear to the eye of reason, that those who profess not to see them must either ignore reason altogether as any guide to belief, or call upon it to believe a far greater miracle than the one that they deny, in supposing all to have come about, somehow or

other, by sheer happy accident. With regard to any master principle amongst these laws, it might be said that central gravitation ruled in all things, yet how constantly is it modified or controlled, and rendered subservient to various ends by means of other forces, either of a mechanical, chemical, or vital nature, as when the cannon ball is projected upwards, though doubtless restrained thereby, even in its earliest and swiftest ascent, and coming again fully under the universal law as soon as the artificial and temporary force has been expended or dropped once more into the greater one. Also, as when the blood, and other fluids, ascend through living bodies, and infinitely more so, in that original propulsion which hurled, and sustains, the vast planetary and cometary bodies in their progress through the immensities of space and time, and set the still vaster bodies of suns rotating round their axes, and also rushing through space. Common cohesion, attraction, and repulsion, also act, under ordinary circumstances, by what are called universal, or invariable laws, which, indeed, they are, in one sense; yet how often are they, also, modified by superior controlling powers, as when solid rocks are crumbled into dust, or liquified, or dissipated in the form of gas, by heat or other chemical action; or when scattered and invisible particles in a gaseous condition, and light and clear as air, are condensed in an instant into a solid mass by the electric spark, or by the mere withdrawal of caloric; while heat and light previously imprisoned, or latent, are set free, and rendered apparent to sight and touch. So the elective affinities of chemistry, when the

various forms of inert matter are left to themselves, are, under the same conditions, never varying and certain, and, in one sense, immutable ; yet how marvellously are they, likewise, overruled and modified, within living bodies, by whose internal vital forces, resisting the innate tendency of the particles themselves to putrefaction, or other form of decomposition, or, on the other hand, breaking up a cohesion that would, otherwise, have lasted indefinitely, these inorganic, yet organisable, elements, are moulded into a fresh infinity of new and complex combinations, ranging from the simpler molecules of microscopic growth, to those of the more complicated organisms of the plant, the fish, the insect, the reptile, the bird, the quadruped, and man himself, with all the innumerable organs and secretions belonging to them—their brains and nervous systems, their hearts and blood-vessels, their lungs, or other respiratory organs, their digestive functions, eyes, ears, voices, and “faculties divine,” to discourse fully upon each of which parts and powers would occupy, as they do, volumes upon volumes, which advancing time is yet ever showing to be very incomplete. For, nothing is more obvious to the reason than the fact that however profound and penetrating may have been the investigations made by the human mind in any branch of science, including even the pure abstract mathematics, though so little dependent on mere experience, the amount of knowledge thereby acquired is as dust in the balance compared with what remains to be gained, even if we left out of consideration—which, however, we cannot do in this argument—the other, and

far more important fact, that there are such multitudes of points, and bonds of invariable connection, clearly recognised by us as uniting the phenomena of such sciences to each other as causes and effects, for the attainment of ends of reason, and thus governing them in their constant order of sequence, towards such ends, which are yet quite beyond the reach of our present earthly faculties, and point, therefore, as the final cause of their origination, to the existence of a wisdom, utterly, as already observed, transcending all imagination, and "past finding out forever," so far as our present powers and present time on earth are concerned. Thus, far, however, we are certain, that the tentative explorations of the supersensuous reason, beyond the strict domain of the senses, and its recognition of motive powers, purposes, and laws, acting in accordance with its own peculiar nature, the methods of whose operation it yet cannot wholly unravel, gives an assurance and conviction of the existence of a higher spirituality than our own in creation, so launching us upon an abyss of moral and intellectual Being, in the eternality and infinitude of which we are altogether overwhelmed with a silent adoration, but the evidences of which are as perceptible to the reason as a purely mental faculty, as are those of the material universe conveyed to it through the senses.

II. Human reason is thus sufficiently far-sighted to perceive, of herself, this infinitely deeper fount and ocean or fund of reason lying beyond her own territories upon every side, but she cannot fathom it. She feels the insoluble mystery of her discovery, and halts before it,

knowing it, however, to be a real discovery as well as a mystery, and that she cannot compass it or penetrate into its depth, only because it is a depth beyond all depth. It is like the bodily eye, as it looks through the medium of the pure, clear, and infinitely deep ether of space, amidst which the starry heavens can be seen, and guessed at, but not tangibly reached, or thoroughly understood. To the mind's eye, it is as an ultimate fact, or certitude of the consciousness and reason, but, at the same time, like every other ultimate fact, a problem, or mystery, necessarily involving the existence of some super-human mental light, the otherwise more numerous and far brighter revelations of which are to us, by reason only of our own ineptitude or blindness, dim, hidden, and so incomprehensible for the present; even as the precise body, and intimate nature of these suns, planets, and comets, are hidden and mysterious to the understanding, while their actual or material existence, though more clear to the sight, is not more clear to the mind, than that of this Supreme Moral Intellectuality, which must infinitely more transcend these Heavens, than the Heavens transcend this Earth. To such, conviction, indeed, we are impelled and bound by a chain of mental necessity, the links of which have been tempered and perfected in the furnace of a pure and severe, yet free, reason, and the self-clasping coils of which we can no more cast off, than we can cast off the conviction of our own existence. Placed in this light and aspect before the mind, the inference is as clear as that any whole must be greater than any one of its parts; that a really efficient cause must be essentially more

powerful than all the effects proceeding from it, and, consequently, that the First, or Primordial, and only possible true cause of all must, necessarily, be infinitely more potent than all the other secondary, or derived, causes put together, or, in other words, Eternal, Omniscient, and Omnipotent. Not that we can be personally, and objectively, cognizant even of all such minor powers or causes in their integrity, much less of the one Grand Cause of all, for there is an infinitude of powers and causes unknown, as compared with those that are known; but the certainty of the unknown is no less real and true, though less accurately estimable than the known, and the first of all powers and causes has a like infinite certainty of truth, corresponding with the evidences of its omnipotence and omniscience, while it certainly is utterly inestimable in the fulness of its totality, not to be separated or identified as finite things are, and quite beyond the compass, though not beyond the reach and penetration of the understanding, as being, indeed, within it, and around it on every side. It is mentally felt and apprehended, as a congeneric spirit, manifesting its attributes in the face of their results, and is, therefore, known to us as an essence, which is neither seen, nor to be personally identified in its integrity, nor, consequently, comprehended; and the like ideas are no less applicable to our experience of the material world, which is very sensibly felt and apprehended, and, therefore, known to us as an entity, but the infinitely greater portion of which we can neither thoroughly see, nor intimately know, nor comprehend in its integrity. The truth is that this very word *incompre-*

hensible, which we apply to so many objects, and assemblages, and groups of objects, so far from being a nullity in this argument, as some dry and barren reasoners would have it, proves that even they themselves acknowledge something behind and within what they see, and is an admission on their part, that there is a want in the mind to come at that something which it knows must lie behind and within, namely, a source of meaning, which, moreover, we are not permitted to invent, but which must force itself into the mind by acceptable evidences, before it can legitimately come out of it, which the finite spirit must uncover from under, and not lay down upon, the face of nature; otherwise, we might impose any meaning we pleased upon all things, just as arbitrarily as we stamp names upon them, or, instead of calling so many matters incomprehensible, as we do, we would merely say that they were so and so, as we see them, and nothing more, and that no meaning was to be either looked for or found in anything at all, that of which the human soul itself is conscious in its own acts, being a mere delusion of fancy, though supposed by it to be a reality and a means of discovering meanings in other things out of itself. But, just as the unseen, the unknown, and the incomprehensible, of the material universe, is as real, and true, when rightly and justly inferred, as the seen, the known, and the comprehended; so the unseen, the unknown, and the incomprehensible, of the spiritual or metaphysical world, or sphere of moral and intellectual powers, when, in like manner, rightly and justly inferred, is as real and true as the known and comprehended.

There are, as already observed, not only facts of the simple consciousness, but, also, facts of the reason, though some would seek almost to contrast them against each other, as if facts and inferences were totally and essentially different things. But reason is but the consciousness extended out of the obvious, and what we call the present, and carried into the abstruse, and what we call the infinite past and the infinite future, of that which is, in reality, eternity. That, for example, one and one make two, and that two and two, therefore, make four, and so on, or that two halves make a whole, or that two things equal to any third thing are equal to one another, &c., are plain facts of the comparatively untutored consciousness; but the deductive process, being carried from such primary and simple truths, towards the infinities to which they lead, one deduction flowing out of another and another, until we reach theorems or declarations of settled fact, so complex and remote, that they are quite beyond all apprehension by the common consciousness, unless it has been developed by education into the highest form of reason, shows us, as in these mathematics, which, in this respect, are of a metaphysical nature, that inferences and deductions are quite as certain as the plainest facts of the ordinary senses; indeed, very often much more so, and certainly more certain, than any induction whatever, no matter how extensive its foundations may be in what are to us at present empirical facts—empirical, that is, as distinguished from those of the pure intelligence, which, according to the ruling of mind, as sole authorised furnisher of any criterion in such matters,

must ever have been, and hereafter be, as they now are.

III. And what, after all, is the nature of this power of apprehension, or spiritual appreciation, in the human mind, as respects things of pure mind and spirit? We cannot, by the senses, appreciate the mental powers, or thoughts, of our fellow-beings; nay, we cannot by any sense, appreciate our own powers, or thoughts, though we be, inwardly, so very intensely conscious of them, even while unconscious, if in health, that we have a body, except by its touching something else, and, if occupied in thought, not even then. How, then, can any sane mind infer, even though such inference should be in accordance with an ancient, but fallacious, or misapplied maxim, that the fact of not being seen is equivalent to non-existence? We know of our own powers, thoughts, and feelings, by an innate reliance on our own self-consciousness, the same powers, thoughts, and feelings, in our fellow beings, we can judge of only from the outward manifestations in word or deed, interpreting them, as far as we can, by those of our own. In this wise, we also perceive acts, and infer motives, in the lower orders of the animal creation. We see the fond or the fierce expression of the eye, the varied notes of the voice, as indicating one or other of the emotions, the fawnings and fondlings of affection, the snarlings of anger, the tempests of ungovernable rage, the yearning self-sacrificing tenderness of the mother towards her young, and the amazing, though apparently unconscious, skill exhibited in attaining all the main objects of their existence. The same, or similar,

acts, are perceived, and motives and powers inferred, in our fellow men, most of them being very obvious for all the practical purposes of life, but some of them being of an order which requires the most cultivated faculties even to appreciate, and far more to imitate or execute independently ; thus leading, in others, to a knowledge of those loftier thoughts and purposes, to which they cannot, of themselves, attain, but can only thus study as at a distance, as in the happier efforts of consummate art in painting, music, or statuary, in the force and nicety exhibited in mechanical inventions, in the masterly arrangement of great and beautiful ideas by a logical rhetoric, in the like beauty and grandeur of poetry, and in the deep researches and lofty speculations of science and philosophy. And so, in like manner, we judge of the higher, or supernatural powers and motives, by their manifestations in external nature, and within ourselves, estimating their transcendent potency, by the degree in which they transcend all manifestations of the human contrivance or genius. Thus, led by this internal light, or mental instinct of moral affinity, belonging to the supersensuous reason, bestowed upon us by such Power, and which is as patent to reason and daily experience as that of the chemical, or any other universally admitted form of affinity, we are enabled to ascend, or descend, as the case may be, from the chamber of our own self-consciousness to an approximative appreciation of the consciousness of other beings, both above and below us in the scale ; finally, feeling compelled, however, under the primary axioms of mind, to rest on the recognition of that eternal

consciousness, and Supreme Essence of Moral Being, of which all these other derived existences can only be viewed as more or less faint reflections, or emanations ; yet truly representing, each one in its own degree, the real nature of the Fountain from which they and their attributes have flowed. So, also, by way of illustration, though we can neither thoroughly comprehend the origin of our own existence, its continuance, its extinction, nor our giving a separate existence to beings similar to ourselves, we are yet left in no doubt of the reality of such matters, so long as we do not proceed to pervert our native faculties, and so distrust ourselves, and everything else in nature. We recognise such things as facts by observation or inference, though we have no actual knowledge of the methods by which such facts of observation or inference are effected. As above stated, all such facts are mysteries, or problems. At the same time we accept such facts, or mysteries of observation, or inference, as certitudes of the consciousness, or of the reason, though only partially, or not at all, understood. And, to continue the illustration, even as we must, in this wise, acknowledge the prior existence of our human progenitors, by the collective and corroborative experience which we have obtained, though we know nothing of them for personal identification ; so, by like collective experience and reason, as well as by our innate acceptance of those absolutely necessary principles or truths by which alone reason and experience can work, must we acknowledge the existence of a Primary and Eternal Rational Cause, redundant of power, love, and

wisdom ; though such cause be unidentifiable as a definite personality, or separable essence of absolute and infinite omniscience of Being ; inasmuch as it is the all-in-all which alone makes anything of all else, and cannot, therefore, be parted from them ; and, if it were, could no more be visible or tangible, or to be formed into any definite shape, than our own minds. And, therefore, though it be thus the necessary essence of all things, it is still the very chief mystery of mysteries, searchable and profoundly appreciable, as a certainty, yet utterly unfathomable and incomprehensible, as a certainty which is without bound or limit, and therefore beyond the compass, as we have said, though still within the reach and partial cognition of our finite faculties, which, indeed, though finite, are yet so indefinite, or so relatively infinite, as to recognise, not merely by a necessity arising out of the contemplation of their own nature, but also from the contemplation of the glorious things of the universe, this real and absolute infinitude of Being, as a certitude of that reason which must ever guide and govern them while in a sane condition, and which, in that sane condition, must perceive evidences of a Reason far above and beyond itself, within and over Creation.

IV. So much for the innumerable illustrations in regard to the wisdom and love of an Eternal Deity that lie within the various objects of this creation, material and immaterial, and so much are these illustrations to be discovered in the descending, yet never-ending, scale of microscopic, or rather atomic, minuteness, as in the ascending, yet equally never-ending, scale of magnitude

immeasurable ; as well as in the more wonderful intricacies of mind, and all its peculiar domains of feeling, fancy, thought, and conscience, which latter furnish even more appropriate and specific proofs, in any argument involving the question of an infinite moral, and intellectual government of the Universe. And, as regards those infinitely varied manifestations of conscious life upon this Earth, which we witness in the vast range of animalcules, insects, fishes, reptiles, birds, quadrupeds, and the vital forces, instincts, intelligence, and moral attributes, of man himself, whose powers, and the indefinite limits of whose powers, we have just been considering ; though, as has been already said, affording sufficient evidence that they are endowed with wonderful ability of control over a great many of the common forces of nature, yet such control is stringently limited, both in degree and in kind, and they, too, must individually and collectively yield, and are, in their turns, pushed out of the sphere of this life, by other, and, generally, baser, elements of action. But, under such views as we have now taken of man, and the Divine Spirit, does this affect his faith and confidence, or make him succumb, under a fear of utter annihilation, from any lurking suspicion of indifference as regards the Deity towards himself ? No ! for, while his imperfect, yet unbounded, mental views of the innumerable, the illimitable, and the eternal, might tend to make him contemplate his God as a Sovereign only from afar off ; yet the close and tender care which he sees bestowed upon details, and minutest circumstances, even in points the most infinitesimal, and yet so all-important to the welfare,

and general, and special comfort, of the creatures concerned, draws him nearer and nearer to Him, as to an omniscient Father, knowing, and providing for, the very inmost feelings and desires of all hearts that live ; until he is made to perceive that, after all, the source from which such universal providence springs, has nothing in nature, or, at least, within his range of nature, so much corresponding with it in kind, however infinitely less in degree, as his own faculties of love and design ; these being faint, and yet, withal, faithful reflections or semblances of that all-enveloping, all-developing, and all-nurturing spirit, to whom, we must bear in mind, as nothing is great, so nothing is small, to whom yesterday is as a thousand years, and a thousand years are as yesterday, and who, while he wheels the fabric of the universe, so to speak, humanly, as by a wave of the invisible hand, or an effluence of the still, or silent, but all-potent will, numbers, also, the hairs of the head, modifies circumstances to circumstances innumerable, for obvious purposes of general happiness, and suffers not even a sparrow or a stone to fall to the ground unheeded of Him, nay, not one of all the millions of molecules in space, much less those souls of men, who can thus look up to Him in conscious thought, and, by such conscious thought, know that they specially partake of the peculiar moral Essence of His Divine Being.

V. Now, if I have, in this endeavour, succeeded in exhibiting the essential connecting links of the chain in this stupendous and solemn argument—that is to say, shown the continuous hold which the reason has, at every step, and at every turn, while tracing from human con-

sciousness and its objects, up to the Spring-head of all, the mind must, long ere this, have been brought to anticipate the one great conclusion, namely, that within, and beyond, and above, all the various and conflicting elements, and agencies in nature, there must be recognised the existence of One creative, mediative, controlling, and co-ordinating Power, which, as by a vital and spiritual involution, and reticulation, so to speak, of the whole universe, stimulates, or restrains, draws together, and puts asunder, combines, orders, and arrays, all those elements and forces, which would often seem so contradictory and so opposed, and brings them, by His supreme law of order, into such an attitude towards each other, that, in the midst of apparent contest and mutual destruction, a fit balance of forces is maintained; so that beauty, harmony, and utility, are evolved as one complete and perfect totality; so far as anything can be perfect that is not actually the Creative God Himself. Some would seek to explain all this system of endless transformation, along with such mutual self-balance, or self-equipoise in action, by framing a Theory of the Convertibility of Forces and Elements; thus making all nature one multi-form unity, an idea already stated herein, and which is not to be objected to if viewed as a secondary operation proceeding from the volitional energy of the Divine Mind. But the question still arises, where is the source of such conversion of Force, or of that primal initiatory, moving, forming, and consequently controlling Power, which clearly runs through all, so as to effect, not a mere endless exhibition of inexplicable

and objectless changes, but the one precise kind of result, as a master-piece of order and reason, and showing forth evident purposes of Thought and Sentiment?

VI. Finally, I ask, once more, what is this originating, enduring, and all-presiding Power, of which we can find no other type in nature, as now seen by us in this sphere, excepting that humble, and faint transcript, or rather dim, and reduced semblance or image of it, which we call our faculty of design, animated by moral or spiritual emotion; or that intellectually synthetical power, by which we order sundry apparently discordant and opposed means towards the accomplishment of one definite and purposed end? What is this Power which, having brought them into being, and endowed them with fixed properties, places its own Intellectual Will, or co-ordinating governance, as a controlling omnipotence over the operations of all such natural forces; which has so precisely tempered what might, otherwise, have been the intolerable heat of the sun, for good; which has caused the land to be upheaved for visibly useful purposes, and keeps the ocean, essentially as such, within its bounds, even while allowing latitude for changes innumerable, both in time and place; which marshals forth all the variety of the seasons, for obviously wise, and beneficent, and specific ends, which holds the stars and planets in their appointed spheres, which vitalises, and endows with such surprising faculties, all the forms of animated nature; which is also felt to guide and inspire the human mind and heart in their emotional longings, and appetite for unselfish love,

unbounded knowledge, intellectual elevation, and immortality, and especially in the subtle and supernal influences of the conscience; and which, finally, defines the limits of all these derived and secondary powers, inclusive of life itself? What, I ask, is this Power of Powers, this transcendent, and inner Life-spring of all other lives; this Spiritual Centre of all spiritual gravitation, or moral affinity, in thought or feeling; what is it but that Divine Essence, of which we find, as already urged, a conscious image within ourselves; faint, and obscure, and infinitely reduced, it is true, but still an image sufficient for all the purposes of a rational faith, and spiritual conviction, as to what is the truth—a mental and spiritual conviction to which we are drawn and held fast, as already said, by a metaphysical, or mental and spiritual affinity; compelling every reasonable mind to hinge ultimately upon the one universal, eternal, and Supreme Spiritual Source, of all originative causation, whithersoever it may have deviously winged its flight for a time, and over, or to, whatsoever secondary or lesser power of attraction, such as Angel, Devil, Destiny, or Force, it may have temporarily hovered, or lingered, or even clung, as the supposed real, but, in any case, necessary and final cause into which all things else must be resolved, and of which they are, to us, the natural key and interpretation, as constituting the out-growth of such Cause, and the expression, to us, of the nature of the inner attributes?

VII. In answer thereto, we might—upon a smaller field of vision, as in the days when the sun was deemed

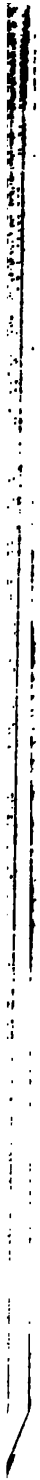
to be of the size of Greece, and Mount Olympus to be a fit abode, or Earthly throne, for the Lord of all the Gods—we might call this Power “Belus,” or “Sol,” or “Jupiter,” or “Pan,” or their still blinder correlatives, the “Cosmic Force,” “Vital Force,” “Heat Force,” or “Natural Force,” of the ancient and modern Atheist ; but, in the infinite scale of an universal survey of mind, as well as of matter, such as we have now endeavoured to take, as far as our powers permitted, we must, acting according to the laws of unsophisticated mind, which compel it to recognise causation, and to see, as well, that such causation be of a kind and degree adequate to the accomplishment of the results—we must, be it repeated, call this recognised, all-consciously living, loving, designing, sustaining, and providing Power, and sole source of all primary causation—GOD. By the common consent of all bodies of mankind, however widely separated from each other in time and place, whether barbarous or civilized, learned or unlearned, good or bad, this designing and controlling Power has been called GOD—GOD, the Almighty Creator and Provider—GOD, Universal, Supreme, and Eternal, GOD, the very Essence of the existence, and action of all matter, and the ineffable and perfect fulness, in Himself, of all mind and spirit ; the “GREAT UNKNOWN GOD” of the Greeks—PARA BRAHMA of the Hindoos—AL-FADER of the ancient Scandinavians—and ALLAH of the Mahomedans—GOD, over all nature, and, veritably, in unchangeable significance of name and idea, the LORD-GOD Almighty of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, JEHOVAH of Moses,

whom, also, we call GOD, our own GOD—the I AM, or
Eternal Spiritual Presence, self-blessed, and all-blessing,
from Everlasting unto Everlasting.

D. N.

THE END.





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